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MEMOIRS OF A RACING JOURNALIST



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SCUTTLE, HIS MAJESTY'S FIRST CLASSIC WINNER, WON THE ONE THOUSAND GUINEAS OF 1928

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# MEMOIRS OF A RACING JOURNALIST

by

SIDNEY GALTREY, O.B.E.

*With a foreword by*

THE EARL OF DERBY, K.G.

*With 19 illustrations*

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DEDICATED TO  
LORD CAMROSE,  
A GREAT JOURNALIST



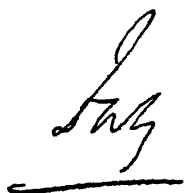
## FOREWORD

**A**LL who are habitual racegoers know that it is Mr. Sidney Galtrey who writes in the *Daily Telegraph* under the name of "Hotspur," a name made well known by the pen of the late Mr. Charles Greenwood.

But there are others who do not know that, and I would, therefore, like to introduce him to the many readers of the book he is publishing as the writer of those well-known articles.

Nobody is brought more into touch with all those who make up the great game of racing than a racing journalist. He is in close touch with owners, trainers, jockeys and racecourse officials, and nobody sees more from behind the scenes than he does.

Needless to say, with such knowledge and with the pen of a clever writer we can expect from Mr. Galtrey a most interesting book. I have had the pleasure of seeing in advance some, if not all, of the articles, and I can assure the racing public they will find his book most entertaining and well worthy of perusal.







## PREFACE

SOMETHING is to be said for writing one's own memoirs. There should be some advantage over another writer who could only make them post-humous. There is an advantage, too, in writing them while one is still operating as it were, certainly not when one is on the wane and fading out. Some think the appropriate time is when the active part has been relinquished and can only be justified in the part of a looker-on from the shades of retirement. It is not my idea, which is, indeed, why I responded to some pressure to write this book. Once off the Turf you may not necessarily be under it to be forgotten. So many come and go that it is inevitable with few exceptions those that go should soon become no more than vague memories.

Yet the advantage in writing of the living is that of being an active unit among them. One may aim at truthfulness at all times, honesty of opinion, and candour in criticism, and yet find it difficult to avoid hurting the individual or offending those upon whom fall the administration of racing and its laws. Nevertheless, I have deliberately chosen to deal with a period known largely to the present generation and to most people still living. I do not think readers want a history serving up to them. They would find it tedious, irksome, and boring. There would be no lightness in the page, nothing, indeed, but an accumulated mass of reiteration.

Fortunately there are horses as well as men and women in the world of racing, and at least the good stories and the truth can be told about them without any risk being incurred by the author. I have chosen to take the reader behind the scenes among the notable racehorses of my day and tell of their trials, sometimes before they had ever been heard of on the race-course. For such details, now extracted for the first time from the private Trials Books of certain great trainers, I have to

make grateful acknowledgment to Mr. Alec Taylor, an amazingly successful trainer in his day at Manton, Mr. Fred Darling of Beckhampton, Mr. R. C. Dawson of Whatcombe, and Mr. H. S. Persse of Stockbridge.

Some effort has been made to avoid too much controversy. Racing might have been invented for the benefit of the controversialist, who regards himself as an idealist. I have been an advocate in a humble way of firmness without rigidity, and of an administration from which some elasticity was not necessarily excluded. Whatever racing was before our time it is certain that it is a democratic institution to-day. Changes have been taking place though their operation has been slow and almost imperceptible. The old autocracy of government may not rule quite so unchallenged.

Our racecourses have changed least of all, because, for the most part, they are ancient institutions that make the ideals of centralisation so difficult of achievement. But we can claim in our time that the breed of the racehorse has improved since he can gallop faster than his remote ancestors. Breeders to-day give more thought to their problems than ever before. The standard of training is higher. It is more specialised, with more and more concentration on feeding, hygiene, and general stable management.

More of the public know something about horses since the War than before it. So I have found it absorbing, and often fascinating, to write of these modern times in this form. The news mind and outlook had to be readjusted. Where news is concerned To-morrow is so often of much more importance than To-day, and To-day than Yesterday. Over a score of years as "Hotspur," an article, often long, wanted every day; old scenes revisited year after year, yet new drama always enacted on them; the unending study of character both of men and horses; and the feeling that one has had friends as well as readers all these years—these things have seemed to make the task of writing this book worth while. I hope you will like the result.

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# MEMOIRS OF A RACING JOURNALIST

## CHAPTER I

### THE JOCKEY CLUB: THEN AND NOW

The meaning of autocracy—When betting and the Press were ignored—Changes date from the War—The Club and the Totalisator—Sir William Nelson and his Pari-Mutuel petition—Story of its theft in Ireland—Fateful Jockey Club meeting in the War—Weakness of local stewardship—The example of enterprise.

**W**HEN I first began to write on racing it was fashionable to speak of the Jockey Club as an autocratic body. Maybe the members relished such isolated distinction in a democratic country. One more than suspected such to be the case. Racing writers of a past generation never thought of saying anything else, and I can well understand they believed what they wrote. They were expected to look up. Jockey Club authority never weakened in their day, though most of them might not have held their own in these highly-specialised days of racing journalism when the specialist is supposed to know something of the breed and make and shape of the horse as well as of its form and prospects. The generation past employed a racecourse jargon of their own. It sufficed them and obviously satisfied their readers, who knew nothing better. There was no liaison between the Jockey Club and the racecourse Press. The one did not want it; the other did not expect it. Intercourse between individuals of the ruling authority and one or two scribes held in special respect did happen on occasions. A predecessor of mine who added to his very considerable reputation as a writer and fine judge

of racing, a profound knowledge of betting—he was unique as a racing Pressman in that he left a fortune when he died!—was known to execute commissions for certain owners who were members of the Jockey Club. One member who won the Derby in the early years of this century distributed silver match-boxes bearing his colours to members of the race-course Press. It was not, I hope, wholly the reason why no reference to him or his colours was complete without use of the adjective “popular.”

I should not be honest with myself if I did not give my impressions of the Jockey Club in my early years. At that time the Lord Durham, who was known to his friends as “Jack,” was still one of the outstanding figures as a Steward and administrator. He was sagacious, fearless, sometimes impulsive like all the Lambtons, and fair. I have heard it said that he was vindictive. So far as my experience went, and I had the pleasure of his friendship in later years, that was quite untrue. The big man is never really vindictive. It is the prerogative of the small man wallowing in temporary power.

One reason why he was outstanding, apart from his abilities and willingness to work hard for the good government of the Turf, was the lack of material within the Club to compare with him. Most of the members were of considerable age and probably too tired to bother about the obligations of stewardship. With few exceptions they were not men who had been, or were, conspicuous in Parliamentary or local government or in industry. Entry to membership was most jealously guarded. Families were well represented as if membership was regarded by them as a form of heirloom. Youth, which in later years in our great institutions was to hammer at the door and force entry and recognition, was only noticed with obvious reluctance. One felt that the honour of election to the Jockey Club must not necessarily be given to individuals whose brains in finance or industry had enabled them to invest vast sums in the breeding and the racing of the thoroughbred. An individual, whether of rank or title, who might have offended one of the paramount in the court of racing, might rely on getting one black ball too many.

Jews have an instinctive love of racing. The glitter of

stake money and the chances of making fortunes out of betting, no matter in what capacity, have been irresistible and never more so than to-day. Yet there is not the remotest possibility of their ever gaining the balance of power in the Jockey Club. There was one in the days of which I am writing, but he was altogether exceptional. He was very wealthy, his influence was far-reaching, and I am sure he had devoted friends who were deeply attached to him for his own personal qualities. His place has been taken by two or three more to-day.

My work began at a time when the Jockey Club professed to ignore two things : betting and the Press. They may have regarded both as necessary evils to racing. Yet, looking back, I am deeply impressed by the loyalty of the Press to the Jockey Club, now and in every generation. It has been so unswerving and of incalculable value. It has also been taken for granted, not perhaps so much now as then. The times have vastly changed and one has had to notice some movement, shall I say to the Left, on the part of the still autocratic body.

What of the changes ? They can be dated as post-War, though during the War the attitude of the Club was most exemplary and dignified, The Stewards, at the head of whom was the late Lord Jersey, then Lord Villiers, who was carrying on the duties with increasing distinction as he got older, obeyed the behest of the War Cabinet not to allow racing to embarrass in the slightest way the conduct of the War. But they did put in great work at a critical time to save the total extinction of racing and gain sanction for the very restricted amount which did take place. When complete resumption was possible in 1919 I found a tremendous reaction. Out of the War had been born more freedom of thought which was calling loudly for expression. Money abounded. It brought some of the war profiteers into ownership. Prices of bloodstock soared to dizzy heights. Foreigners from all the continents brought their heavy money bags to compete in the open market. The Jockey Club was never so important, its responsibilities never more serious.

There was even a moment when a suggestion was made in all seriousness that it should have the benefit of the advice of a new body. For one day my friend, who contributes the

racing articles to *The Times*, came out with a startling article, the first two sentences of which read :

"The whole system of the management of the Turf is about to be altered without in any way diminishing the prestige or power of the Jockey Club, by the formation of an organisation which will represent the various parts which, when combined, make up the Turf of to-day. The power of the Jockey Club will be immensely strengthened by this new organisation."

One gathered that the five constituent parts of the new body would be representatives of owners and breeders, executives, trainers, bookmakers, and the Press. A member of the Jockey Club would preside over it, either Lord Derby or Lord Lonsdale, who were specifically named. And so on. Now I surmised the writer must have received some special inspiration. What its source was I never knew, either then or now. I only suspect. There was really no reason to go further since nothing happened. No mine exploded under the Jockey Club, if, indeed, one had been put there under another name. The omnipotence of the Club was absolutely unaffected. Those within the Club felt no loss of their customary security; those outside it were submissive and content as ever.

It can no longer be said that the Jockey Club of to-day ignores both betting and the Press, and I am sure no member has been more responsible for the changed outlook and policy than Lord Hamilton of Dalzell, who I do not hesitate to describe as the ablest Steward of the Jockey Club since the best days of Lord Durham. I specially name him as such because he is older as an administrator than two other very capable senior Stewards of recent times in Lord Rosebery and Lord Harewood. From time to time Lord Hamilton of Dalzell owns a racehorse or two in training, never more because he makes no pretence of being a rich man. He is interested in Hamilton Park racecourse in Scotland. It is laid out on what used to be the Duke of Hamilton's Park and is now the property of the town of Hamilton. The point is that fortunately he has the ability and the time available for the conduct of Jockey Club affairs, which, I imagine, have grown considerably in recent years. To-day he is the King's representative at Royal Ascot.

Now no one associated with the Jockey Club more than

Lord Hamilton of Dalzell has been so zealous in prosecuting an ardent belief that betting should be made to contribute to the maintenance of racing. It was more than a belief. It was a resolve. He was the prime mover and instigator in the Jockey Club's decision to advocate for the introduction of the Totalisator on racecourses. He was at the elbow, so to say, of Sir Ralph Glyn, who introduced the Bill into the House of Commons only to see it lacerated almost out of recognition in the course of its stormy passage through the Committee stages.

An Act of Parliament, framed on the lines of the original Bill, would have vested control in the Jockey Club, and the short history of the Tote in this country would certainly have differed enormously from what has actually happened. Yet Lord Hamilton of Dalzell accepted what Parliament so tardily conceded, and from its inception he has represented the Jockey Club on the Racecourse Betting Control Board. I am not going to permit myself to drift into criticism at this point on its policy. Mistakes have been admitted, and they have been apologised for on the grounds of lack of experience and precedents in this country, and because, having no funds at the outset, like, say, any big public undertaking or a company, it had to begin by borrowing very big sums representing a great liability in the aggregate.

I personally do not attribute failure to realise the dreams and forecasts of its advocates to individuals, or to policy, so much as to the strangling restrictions, which, until some form of relief comes, look like keeping the most admirable principle for ever at a dead end. Scattered racecourses and small crowds at many of them, a betting turnover on them which is but fractional of what is taking place on such races throughout Great Britain and Ireland, inability to tap such "away" betting except by private enterprise, and the deeply entrenched book-makers who absolutely monopolise the big money betting which represents so much of the gross turnover—these are the strangling factors which an emasculated Act of Parliament did nothing to contend against.

It will be gathered that I do not advise banking too confidently on the Tote in this country fulfilling its ideals. By this time breeding, racing, racecourses, and possibly charities should have been receiving substantial contributions from

Totalisator profits passed on by the Board of Control. Actually, early in 1934, a grant of £2000 was made to light horse breeding. By doing so the Board can be said to have saved light horse breeding, since with no Government grant it would have languished most seriously. The Treasury then augmented the grant. The Board seem to find some measure of relief in making it known that they are holding their own. If I am wrong then a mistake will never be so cheerfully admitted, but I am afraid this book will be published long before the great day of enrichment comes to racing and breeding from betting. And yet I am not greatly worried that a doleful picture sketched by H.H. the Aga Khan is ever likely to come true.

It was written by him as an urge for the introduction of the Tote on our racecourses, not since it was established. He wrote: "I have no doubt that unless a serious attempt is made to make the position of owners—I do not say safe, but at least not an impossible one as at present, and unless the breeders are given a fair possibility of holding their own by contributions of, say, £100,000 to start with from the betting public, who profit by all this, the supremacy in the thoroughbred industry will pass from England to America and the Continent within our lifetime."

Some years later the Aga Khan sees the Tote in England established and interesting lots of people, almost wholly small backers and chiefly women, but unproductive as he and we all desire. Then does he realise the urgency of tapping the great volume of off-the-course betting at present carried on by starting-price bookmakers. Let us, he says, have something on the lines of the Pari-Mutuel Urbain as in France, because it has saved French racing in the times of difficulty and financial stringency generally.

I can claim to have had a good deal to do with first bringing the question of Pari-Mutuel betting seriously before the Jockey Club. The story is of some interest and not unamusing. It opened before the Jockey Club arrived at a decision to sponsor a Parliamentary movement to secure a sanctioning Act of Parliament, well ahead, too, of Mr. Winston Churchill's unfortunate betting tax. I had personally been flirting with the subject of Pari-Mutuel betting for some time and wondering whether what was producing such marvellous sums for

racing and breeding in other countries, and making racing so very cheap for the racegoer, while giving him the most sumptuous accommodation for his money, could not be introduced to England. One realised there would have to be legislation. But first of all it would be necessary to interest the Jockey Club. I had some long talks on the subject with the Director of Remounts when I was on his staff at the War Office. He was tremendously keen, not because he had any interest in racing but that there were possibilities of grants being forthcoming in aid of light horse breeding. Now that did interest him in his capacity as Director of Remounts at the War Office. He understood that Government horse breeding in France derived some benefits from the profits on Pari-Mutuel betting in that country.

It happened that just about this time the late Sir William Nelson came to me and raised this very subject. Could not I, he inquired, as a prominent and widely read writer on racing, do something about it? If the Jockey Club could realise what a demand there was for it among all holding a stake in breeding and racing (excepting bookmakers) then they would, he added, be bound to take notice. That he should seem so earnest rather surprised me. I knew he had first-hand knowledge of the prosperous racing in the Argentine for a good number of years. He had big meat interests, and a line of specially built meat-carrying ships with modern refrigerating gear bore his name. The first "Robin Goodfellow" of the *Dail Mail* neatly referred to him as a "dead meat" merchant. It was a saucy thing to say because the innuendo that occurred to some of us was that his horses might have been in the betting market when not live candidates. Ostensibly the writer had in mind the cargoes carried by his ships.

He was a thick-set, very florid-faced man of seventy or so years of age. I can believe that he was a connoisseur of old brandy. He gave me the impression of getting very special enjoyment out of having a good bet on any of his winners, in which respect he was certainly not peculiar. The point is that he was not a non-betting owner and that he liked to make the bookmakers contribute handsomely to the costs of his horses in training. There is a big difference in racing between "wanting" and "getting." I am sure he did not get all he wanted in that respect. For a long time he had for trainer



## 24 MEMOIRS OF A RACING JOURNALIST

John Fallon, who had filled the position at Druid's Lodge when that establishment on Salisbury Plain specialised in well-planned big handicap coups. The brains behind the training skill of Fallon were not available for Sir William.

It was agreed that Sir William Nelson should open his campaign by contributing a long letter to the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, to be followed by support in the "Hotspur" columns. Splendid, he said, and then added: "But will you write the letter for me? I know what I would like to say, but you will do it so much better than I." Again I agreed. He professed to be delighted with the restrained and still convincing tone of the letter which he signed with alacrity without making the slightest correction. It was published, and before many days one realised that there was considerable support for what was advocated in influential breeding and racing circles.

He had written: "As a Magistrate I can see the benefit of confining betting to the Pari-Mutuel on the racecourses." Then: "I am a breeder and racer of horses. I love the thoroughbred and I confess it gives me great pleasure and relaxation after many years of toil in helping to build up two of our greatest industries to see those horses raced on the racecourse. I enjoy having a bet and experience the sensations at winning of one who sees his judgment confirmed. I recognise that hitherto the Jockey Club, who so wisely administer the laws of racing, have taken no official notice of betting, but I respectfully suggest to them now, as also to the authorities of the State, that an appropriate time has arrived to introduce the Pari-Mutuel for the benefit and enlargement of the nation's horse breeding industry."

Having launched that touching appeal to all authorities it was decided that the next move should take the form of promoting a petition. After all we were only about ten years before our time. I do not recollect a single refusal to sign from a reputable owner, breeder, or trainer. There never was such a representative petition, intended, as it was, for the Jockey Club. Among the owners none were so keen as the late Sir Edward Hulton and Sir Walter Gilbey, none among the trainers so much as Mr. Persse. Now the Irish breeder of The Tetrarch, Mr. E. Kennedy, wanted it over in Ireland in order that he might secure the support and signatures of all

important breeders, owners, and trainers in Ireland. It was duly delivered to him and acknowledged.

Then it disappeared as neatly and completely as any gold watch or wallet withdrawn on a racecourse by a "whizzer," which, I believe, is the trade or professional name for a pick-pocket. Mr. Kennedy thought a good place to get plenty of signatures would be the racecourse on The Curragh. He was a person of some importance there. He arrived carrying the petition in a neat leather case under his arm. No one could possibly wish to deprive him of it. He never thought of the bookmakers, whose doom might, of course, be sounded in the event of the State legalising the "machine" while eliminating the bookmaker as in France. After all, they were entitled to be interested in the petition and its destination. I am not associating them with its disappearance, because I have absolutely no evidence that any enterprising and imaginative member of the fraternity could have been implicated. I only know that they were not likely to go into mourning over its disappearance.

Mr. Kennedy, if indeed the thought occurred to him among countrymen so renowned for their blandness and innocence of purpose, decided that the best place for the petition was to make it a buffer between himself and his hard-bottom chair in the Stand. So he sat on it. All, of course, was well, until something exciting happened, say, the finish of a race, causing him to stand up. Before he sat down again he realised that the petition had gone. He was raging, frantic, but still it had gone and he was never to set eyes on it again. He had been charged with the responsibility of the care of the much-signed petition and he had lost it.

In the circumstances I can understand the agony in every word of the letter he wrote to me deploring the loss. He could do nothing. We had to do something. We drew up a list of signatories in England to the best of our recollection. To them we added the names of supporters as memorised by Mr. Kennedy. The complete list became the petition which was ultimately forwarded to the Stewards of the Jockey Club together with an explanatory letter. It was brought to the notice of the members by the then senior Steward, Lord Villiers. I thought he showed some sympathy with the arguments and he recognised the influence of the names supporting

them. But he told his brother members that he thought the time inopportune for getting to grips with the revolution, and brother members acquiesced. Some years later, not so very long after the death of Lord Jersey, they acquiesced in the resolve to support a Bill in Parliament.

The sketch I have made of Jockey Club policy during the War and afterwards will convey some idea of expansion. The ultra-conservatism of the ruling body was reacting to the convulsions of the times. I know this was so, for when I came back to active work on demobilisation I was sensitive of a change. Something of the old aloofness had gone. We had all been through a crisis. Racing had survived it and there was the feeling that everyone had helped to save it in the darkest hours. I had some knowledge, because of my position at headquarters, of when the hours were darkest and when the light first began to streak in. The Pressman, who had been something else in the War, could not be altogether ignored when he reverted to his job. So there began then something of a better understanding, and for the initiation of it and the development I shall always credit Lord Jersey in the first place and then Lord Hamilton of Dalzell. Lord Rosebery and Lord Harewood have maintained it to the advantage, I believe, of racing and a better appreciation of its problems and passing difficulties. For when depression came, accompanied by the severe competition of dog racing, motoring, flash cinemas, and other absorbers of spare cash, racing needed its friends.

I have the greatest admiration for the Jockey Club and for those of its really active members who have sacrificed their leisure for years in order to serve it. I think it has done wonders since the War. The old Tory spirit has been moved to heed the restlessness of the age and the necessity of trimming sails to the passing breeze while maintaining ancient authority. That has never been questioned. There have been times when I have wondered why this or that man had not been elected to membership in the belief that solid support of racing called for recognition in the highest possible form. Lord Woolavington was only elected after many years of lavish support and when not physically fit enough to take part in active legislation. Sir Abe Bailey was admitted when his energies as a possible administrator had wearied. Lord Astor, after taking the highest honours as a breeder, was elected after

a considerable interval though he has shown no desire, either through the absence of invitation or unwillingness, to undertake active duties. Apparently the gaining of the highest honours are no guarantee to entrance or H.H. the Aga Khan would surely have been elected before now. He is, nevertheless, immensely esteemed for his services to India and the Empire.

Yet the Jockey Club commands respect. It may still be shy of recognising the pressing claims of youth and of going outside its age-old prescribed channels for its recruits. What an earthshaking thing it would be, for instance, if the Jockey Club were to elect to its august body some small owner or breeder, or even a representative of the newspaper world. Such things are unlikely. There are limits in evolution. Perhaps nothing was more refreshing in the history of the Jockey Club than the famous debate which took place at Derby House in London on the 16th of March, 1915. There were actually recriminations among the members.

They arose out of a demand in correspondence, published chiefly in *The Times*, that racing should be entirely suspended for a year or two or until the War ended. The Duke of Portland, Lord Dunraven, and the Hon. F. W. Lambton, Lord Durham's twin brother, had contributed letters favouring total suspension, at any rate for a time. If they had come up for election to the Club about that time I have no doubt they would have been badly black-balled. I gather they were not very popular. From the Duke of Portland a very long statement was read, almost as long as a chapter of this book. He had accepted the unfounded allegation that wounded were to be turned out of Epsom Grand Stand in order that the Derby and summer meeting of 1915 should be run there. Lord Durham, Lord Rosebery, Lord Villiers (as Lord Jersey then was), Admiral of the Fleet Sir Hedworth Meux, in particular, expressed deep annoyance. They alleged misrepresentation of the attitude of the Stewards of the Jockey Club.

"He accepted," said Lord Durham of the Duke of Portland, "or hypnotised himself into believing, that the Stewards of the Jockey Club and the Stewards of Epsom, and the racing community in general, would commit the unspeakable atrocity of ill-treating wounded soldiers because they were interfering with the ordinary usages of portions of racecourses." Without any inquiry and without any evidence, the Duke of Portland

wrote a letter to *The Times* maligning the upholders of a sport from which he had derived almost unexampled success and benefit, etc.

The late Lord Rosebery, once Prime Minister and the owner and breeder of three Derby winners, castigated the Duke of Portland and those who had sought to close down even a minimum of racing so that breeding could be kept alive. I cannot resist quoting this passage from his speech at Derby House:

"There was an expression in the letter of the Duke of Portland, or in one of the numerous papers that had been read to the meeting, to the effect that this war was incomparably greater than any war which had ever been waged before in this world. As regards the millions engaged in it, that, no doubt, might be true, but as regards the danger to this country he did not think it was true. In the great war against Napoleon when the greatest genius perhaps that the world had ever seen was gripping at our very throat, and keeping us in a perpetual panic from the fear of invasion and a naval descent for years and years, at a time when, after the Peace of Tilsit, the whole main continent of Europe, from France to Siberia, was arrayed in arms against us, and when we had not a single ally in our favour, he said that contest and that crisis were far greater than even the national contest in which, with many staunch allies, this country was engaged at this moment. We were then isolated and alone; we seemed to be at the mercy of this great and unprecedented conqueror, and yet never for one moment did it occur to our forefathers to stop their racing, to hold down their heads, and to abandon themselves to mourning, fasting, and affliction because they were engaged in that great contest."

The Jockey Club, at this historic meeting, approved a previous decision to the effect that racing should be carried out "where the local conditions permit and the feeling of the locality is not averse to the meeting being held." There came further crises as the War was prolonged. The discussion which took place in March of 1915 would scarcely have been appropriate to the situation as it was two years later. But then who could have visualised so far ahead? Certainly no one at that Jockey Club meeting. I do know that two years later the crisis where racing was concerned became most acute and that absolute cessation would never have been averted but for the tact of Lord Villiers who had become Lord Jersey, the weight

thrown into the scale of support from the Quartermaster-General of the Forces (Sir John Cowans), and his Director of Remounts, and the rather unexpected approval of Lord Curzon, who two years before had been an uncompromising and relentless enemy of racing in wartime.

It used to be said that the Jockey Club would never admit Youth into its conclaves. It must for ever be composed of old men, or men content to accept the distinction and leave the task of administration to the few capable and willing to undertake it. The impeachment is not proved. Younger men have been elected. They are being given their chance. We must assume, because they have not displayed special attributes of statesmanship in Imperial Government, that they are not necessarily lacking in the capacity to legislate on the Turf when the opportunity shall present itself.

We may be so prone to lose sight of the fact that Youth is entitled to its chance even in the administration of racing. I write with some satisfaction that in the Jockey Club of recent years age has not been accepted, as it once was, as a primary qualification for office. Lord Hamilton of Dalzell is not an old man to-day and it is years since his personality forced itself to the forefront of Jockey Club administration. Lord Rosebery and Lord Harewood have been senior Stewards in recent years. They are comparatively young men.

What of local stewardship? It is of quite vital importance. In principle it should reflect the spirit of Jockey Club administration. I have found in it much to criticise, so much that has laid itself open to the call of this and that writer and this and that Gimcrack dinner speaker. They have called for stipendiary stewards, sometimes known as advisory stewards. They have been called by the Jockey Club "secretaries to Stewards," which I do not think is a sufficiently important title. They should have rather more dignity than what a secretaryship conveys in this regard. I subscribe to the view that local stewardship is a real weakness in the administrative system of English racing. For all I know it may always have been a weakness. Even if it served generations ago it does not follow that haphazard voluntary stewardship is the best possible principle to-day.

The local executives are primarily to blame, and the Jockey Club in a lesser degree, for not being firm with the executives

and insisting on efficient stewardship. Here and there at the more prominent meetings certain members of the Jockey Club, whose names command respect, will officiate, though some may not have been racing for some time and may not be in touch with the form. They may not even know the colours so as to follow the racing closely. There are men who have grown old, with their faculties impaired through age, who, nevertheless, expect as a right to be invited to officiate. They will expect until they die. Some of them are notorious as backers. They like to back winners, which means that they must accept confidences from individuals whose horses must come under their notice. How is it possible in human nature for them to be impartial?

A few favoured trainers are *persona grata* in stewards' luncheon rooms. The hospitality is at the expense of the shareholders of the meeting. Again it is not in human nature to question the morale of those who have been your guests and whose mind possibly has been opened to you. There are occasions when I think stewards are asked to act because they are less likely than anyone on the course to be familiar with the form. They listen to the evidence of the judge and some of the jockeys, whose evidence I would never ask for except to hear them in their defence or as complainants. I long for the day when there will be a raising of the standard of local stewardship, and when it comes we might reasonably expect some regard being paid to an age limit while recognising the potential value of the man of shrewd understanding with no axes to grind and with a limited number of friends.

Racing needs all its friends in these times of deadly competition. Its best friends are those with vision who will help the Jockey Club to govern on healthy progressive lines. The competition is very serious. When greyhound racing was first introduced Lord Lonsdale gave it two years to run its course. Others no doubt shared in the belief. They were disillusioned long ago. The pinch of competition is being felt which is crippling progress and postponing the appointment of advisory stewards, the payment of whom was to be a contribution from executives. In 1919 a committee of enquiry appointed by the Jockey Club, and made up of Lord Hamilton of Dalzell (chairman), Sir John Thursby, Sir Leonard Brassey, the Marquis of Londonderry, and Sir

Berkeley Sheffield, made certain recommendations among which were: (1) the consideration by the Jockey Club of schemes to amalgamate racecourses; (2) an expression of opinion that a larger number of people would attend race meetings if the cost were smaller, the transport facilities better, and the accommodation greatly improved, especially for ladies, while having lower charges of admission.

The expression of opinion on the subject of centralisation was of very special importance and is referred to now because it seems to have been altogether forgotten. "In the event," said the report, "of proposals for amalgamation being approved, we consider that an increased number of days' racing might be allotted to the surviving racecourses, and greater fixity of tenure granted to them by guaranteeing fixtures for a certain number of years conditionally on all arrangements being brought fully up-to-date." Fifteen years later we are still "as you were" in such matters.

The Jockey Club has moved on. It has made and it has lost members through death in the interval. It has not been able to find the money for paid advisory stewards, but it has put its house in order at Newmarket. It has made a splendid gesture to the public and to all racecourse executives. Newmarket has been transformed not only on the celebrated Rowley Mile course, but on the July course, on which there are only seven days racing a year, a very big sum of money has been expended on new stands and in altering the run of the course. The sum runs into many thousands of pounds. Some day something will be spared for the vital detail of stewardship.



## CHAPTER II

## RACING AND TRAVEL IN MANY LANDS

The racing journalist never off the chain—Early days in India—The poor *sahib* and great possibilities in sport—Racing and curling in St. Moritz—Travel and sport in Ceylon—Racing at the Cape—A Sir Abe Bailey memory at Cape Point—The West Indies and Brazil—Lazy days and lively nights.

THE racing journalist is not as a rule a traveller far beyond his own country. Always on the move he may be at home, but such is imposed of necessity and on seven days of every week until the time comes to take a much-wanted breather. He is never really off the chain, at the other end of which is the big morning newspaper, which not only absorbs his output every day, but can make contact, somehow, anywhere, when an emergency arises. A man famous on the Turf dies. His racing "life" is wanted instantly. A famous racehorse breaks down, dies, or is the subject of some mystery. There is a "story" behind it. The Jockey Club is moving in this or that direction. In which? It is for the racing journalist to know and to say. He must not only be well informed, but he must have that news sense of values which gets the most readable show into the shop window, so to say. He is free only when he escapes the country during his period of leave.

If I have travelled more than most—Europe, Asia, Africa, America, all the continents, in fact, except Australia—it has been due to inclination as well as to desire to go in search of the sun at the turn of the year. Contrasts can be stimulating, and never more so than to one who, for so long on end in every year, must meet the same faces, listen to the same talk in the paddock, and be assailed with the same fatuous questions. "Will this win?" "This can't be beat," as the careless grammarian observes when fishing for confirmation or contradiction. Or again: "Are you really sure so and so will win?" As

if one would be a seven-day-a-week racing journalist when there were such things as racing certainties! Why, I should long ago have been roaming the seven seas in my own yacht, that is, if I managed to get away with the bookmakers' money while my own knowledge remained my own secret.

One speaks the same language in the racing world. Its vocabulary is so rigidly limited. It might almost be said to consist of the one word "good," except, let me hasten to add, where betting is concerned. They have another word in use then, with sometimes an adjective. The horse is a good one: the performance is good: it is a good looker: the hocks are good: the limbs are good. Twenty-three years ago, after Sunstar had been highly tried before he won the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby, his owner, Mr. J. B. Joel, wrote to me and said: "No horse could have done so well in his trial without being a good one." You see they spoke the same language then.

However, it was not by way of an escape that I went to India about the beginning of the century. It was as a very young man with a career to make in journalism, to edit a weekly sporting paper and work on *The Times of India* with Lovat Fraser the editor, Stanley Reed, who succeeded him as editor and was knighted, and Lawrence Neame, who later made a big name for himself in journalism on the Rand. They were three years the memory of which will ever endure. It is true the climate of Bombay is an evil thing for the white man who must endure it for a long spell without a break up country in the hills. It beat me in the end to the extent of sending me home very sick and with what looked like a bright career broken. It nearly beat me altogether, the nearest possible thing in fact.

Yet it was all so well worth while. In those days India was a grand country for the poor *sahib* with a taste for sport. He could get it for next to nothing. What there was in him to bring out would surely come out. There was the Bombay Light Horse to join as the *sahibs'* volunteer corps, offering the chance, as it did, of some semi-serious soldiering and of doing mounted escort duty in blazing heat in the procession from the Apollo Bunder to Government House on Malabar Hill when Kitchener arrived as C.-in-C., or a new Governor would be showing up. There was modest *shikar* to be had

without going so very many miles up-country; and grateful fanning breezes as one gazed out in the evenings from the Yacht Club's front across the great waters of the harbour.

Always there was the "gup" of the Gymkhana Club as a distraction during cocktail time, and the mounted sports they organised, which, because they were held in the monsoon months, were called "Mud." Some strange things they called motor cars were just beginning to arrive. I had my first ride in one in Bombay, a glorious adventure in something that spat and coughed, sometimes actually chug-chugged, and would have nothing to do with hills unless physically assisted by the crew. The proud and very self-conscious driver steered by a lever. The natives gazed in some amazement, as they did all their lives at anything the *sahib* might perpetrate, but they thought no more of getting out of its way than they would have had it been a bullock cart.

So, because the motor car was scarcely known, and only the *ticca gharry* with its mean-looking pony was available for those who did not keep their own horses and *gharries*, the poor *sahib* might augment his income out of some judicious "coping" in "walers" from Australia and ponies from the Arabian Gulf. Your syce only cost you Rs10 a month, about thirteen shillings and fourpence. There was always the possibility of finding something exceptional for very little money in the Arab stables, especially if you happened to be as friendly, as I was, with Sulleyman Abdul Wahed. He knew a likely one in the rough, ill-nourished, and abandoned looking because it had not long been landed. You would proceed to "make" it as your hack. It might be good enough for polo. If so, pass it on by all means, for the market was good. It might even be good enough to put into racing at Mahaluxmi under the rules of the Western India Turf Club, then so well managed by Cecil Gray. If so, your dealing would show a big profit which would inevitably send you looking for bargains in the rough again.

I realise how the India of those days must have changed enormously. Some day there may come a chance of seeing for myself and comparing then and now. There will be the racecourse at Mahaluxmi to revisit. I am assured I shall hardly recognise the splendid course and stands, the beginnings of which were laid by Cecil Gray and brilliantly carried

on by Hughes, both, alas, no more. Do hounds, I wonder, still meet soon after six a.m., twice a week, at Santa Cruz and Bandara, and hunt the jackal for an hour or two over cactus and diabolical dried-up paddy bunds?

What of polo which was not exclusively the rich man's game in those days? I used to think the Maharajah of Ulwar was the best Native player I ever saw in Bombay, but there were others from Hyderabad playing as the "Golcondas" who ran him close. And there were the 20th Hussars, who came to win the Bombay tournament and the Inter-Regimental in India as I also saw them win the Inter-Regimental at Hurlingham some years later. They included Lee at back, Cawley No. 1, who was killed early in the War, Schreiber and Hessey. There were the Christmas jaunts to Calcutta to see the races for the Viceroy's Cup, the winners of which were the Australian horses Great Scot and Fitzgraston. The English imported horse has ousted the "waler" from India's chief races. Not only then, but now I am impressed with the frequency with which the same horse has won the Cup more than once and even more than twice.

Once there occurred a welcome break when for the paper I found myself in the Gaekwar of Baroda's capital in Kathiawar to write about a week of festivities on the occasion of his son's marriage. There were the great processions in the City in which gaily caparisoned and painted elephants, the Maharajah's troops, musicians, high officials of State, and the families of bridegroom and bride took part. For the Maharajah's European guests there were elaborately organised cheetah hunts, when the bullock cart, on which was the hooded cheetah, stealthily approached a herd of black buck out on the plain; the banquets at this or that Palace and the highly complimentary and flowery oratory: and rides in the moonlight on elephants through torch-lighted streets of the bazaar and its precincts. Slightly faded and blurred memories they may be now, waiting only to be rekindled by personal contact again, if, indeed, such be possible thirty years or so later.

For some years after the War St. Moritz for winter-time curling and diversions in the stupefying heat of the hotels became a place of annual pilgrimage. It was not possible to get away from racing even though one lived and played six thousand feet up. Owners, trainers and jockeys repaired

there, a few bookmakers, rarely a backer. They laid out a racecourse on the two or three feet of snow on the frozen lake, they rolled it and rolled it, put up a makeshift weighing-room of rough timber, fenced off some enclosures, and, of course, a Tote building. Horses were brought up from Zurich, some from Italy, a few from Germany. The Swiss franc was worth quite a lot. The stakes were attractive. By way of variety there were races for trotting horses. As the meeting drew near they would train on the track, and perhaps in the narrow streets of the village. It was just as well not to get in the way of a trotting sulky.

There were jockeys and to spare of international fame. Americans gave or hired out their services. I am told they persuaded Danny Maher to do so when he was top dog in England. "Skeets" Martin could have had all the riding he wanted, and I have seen Frank O'Neill, Matt MacGee, and the late George Archibald ride winners at one time or another. Archibald was sought after by the Germans. He had ridden with a good deal of success in that country. He was pretty good to follow, too, on the snow track because he knew the importance of getting well away and establishing a lead. Horses could not quicken in the snow. It struck me as being much worse than heavy going, but the chief reason why it was of such importance to be in front was that the first one or two threw up such a blizzard of snow particles as to fill the ears, eyes, and nostrils of the unfortunates behind.

There came a time when I tired of weather which could not be relied on, the chilling Maloya wind which brought much cloud down the valley, and the days of idleness when it snowed quietly and steadily for hours on end. So I left my curling stones behind and in 1926 went East again, this time to wander for a while in Ceylon.

It is a country to be taken leisurely. My good friend, Dr. Sydney Garne, was scared that I did not see everything in the days available, and so he organised a sort of rush down the touch line which must embrace the sights of Colombo, a dash down the coast south to Galle, a quick move up-country to Kandy which was to serve as a jumping-off ground for visits to Anarandhapura, Trincomalee, and, of course, Nuwara Eliya. Along the so-called jungle roads there would, he said, be the chance of a shot at leopard, some good fishing in



*me and my Pal. From Steve x "Jack"*

THE LAST PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN OF BROWN JACK WITH STEVE DONOGHUE UP, AUG., 1934  
Winner of seven races at Ascot, including six consecutive Queen Alexandra Stakes. The most remarkable old horse and stayer of his day.



Trincomalee harbour, and golf and racing at Nuwara Eliya. I explained that I was not dying to see a racecourse. Nevertheless, I did see the quaint affair at Galles, a still quainter affair at Kandy, something quite good at Nuwara Eliya, and a racecourse very good indeed at Colombo. Furthermore, I had a day's racing at Nuwara Eliya, over six thousand feet above sea-level, with a card of nine events, each run prompt on time, and for the first time in my life, by invitation, I sat among the Stewards in their holy of holies. Seven years later a similar compliment was paid to a visiting journalist whose paper at any rate was known and respected. I had a seat on the Stewards' stand of the Milnerton Turf Club at Capetown.

In 1926 there was still prosperity in the island. It is true the wave that had brought it was just beginning to recede, but few, I thought, were aware of the fact, or, if they were, they were content to abide by the convenient philosophy which licenses the pleasures of to-day lest we be not here to enjoy those of to-morrow. So was there much revelry as the planters came into Kandy or Nuwara Eliya. The Ceylon Mounted Rifles were then celebrating after the formalities of inspection. And why not? Rubber was at least ten times the amount per pound that it is as I write.

Included in the grand rush, through, round, and up and down the island, was one who was not intended by Nature to live in the tropics, but who would never mind laying £10,000 to £1000 against a horse for a big race in England. It was explained to him that he might have the luck to bag a leopard with a neat shot from the car if one should be so unfortunate as to be crossing a jungle road about the time we were on it. Or, failing such "luck," there would always be the chance of a shot at jungle cock or small deer. Again one got the impression that Nature had not intended him to be a *shikari*. For the moment he kept his thoughts to himself. One began to have doubts of his partiality for big game shooting when he showed no enthusiasm at the suggestion, on arriving at Anarandhapura, that we should go after a leopard which had been seen on the road about the fifteenth milestone. He went, but honesty compels me to admit that this usually cheerful person was not at his best until we were back at our starting-point having drawn a blank.

His room at the rest-house was on the ground floor. We



were on the first floor. He did not like that, and suggested we had not given enough thought to the arrangements, or perhaps too much. The door was not really a door at all, just a half-affair and rather less than that. His servant slept on the threshold. Fireflies lighted him to bed underneath his mosquito curtain. Bull frogs, crickets, night birds, and nocturnal wanderers, maybe some jackals, set up a discord which probably delayed sleep. He had seen monkeys in the overhanging trees. The glimmer from a hurricane lamp was not the same thing as the lights of Piccadilly Circus. The orders were to be up before the dawn and hit the road to Trincomalee, perhaps also to hit with something out of a gun which must have been dying to be let off. He showed little enthusiasm.

We started at dawn with a spot light on. He was asked to keep a sharp look-out on his side of the car and charge the gun with slugs. Just in case. . . . He obeyed and soon reported that the eyes of something big were staring into the spot light. He was informed they belonged to some domestic buffaloes. The day soon came and a pair of jungle cock were seen on the edge of the jungle.

"What have you got in the gun?" whispered our doctor-pilot.

"Slugs."

"Slugs? They're no good. Take 'em out and put in some shot."

I pulled on the bird that looked so like a domestic rooster. It merely disappeared into the undergrowth.

"I'll lay three to one you didn't get it," challenged our friend.

He was himself again. He won. They always do. Yet there was a moment when acute depression overtook him again. It was midday with the sun casting scarcely a shadow. Progress had been slow because the car was steering badly on the rather narrow road. We should have been in Trincomalee, but there were still thirty miles to go. The doctor suggested that he and I should go into the jungle a little way. The "leviathan of the Ring" said he preferred to mind the car. His shirt was wide open at the neck. Perspiration had not improved the appearance of the shirt. His topee was set on at a somewhat jaunty angle though it had anything but a homey

appearance. The champagne of years was quietly oozing from his amiable, ample features. We left him there. The native chauffeur also left him for a while. He was alone, alone with his own thoughts on a sun-bleached deserted jungle road. A gun was his only comfort, and he was not liking that in case it went off. We returned to find him extremely peevish but obviously glad to see us emerge out of the shadows into the dazzling sunlight.

"How about it now?" he was asked.

"Beautiful," he answered. "But give me oo Piccadilly. What's wrong with that?"

I sailed on the amazingly clear and crystal waters of Trincomalee's gorgeous harbour in a crazy thing they called a catamaran, with long, crude outriggers on one side and a rag for a sail. We stopped to fish until I had caught the evening meal of grey mullet and some gaily coloured fish. They were taken back to our lover of Piccadilly who had asked to be excused what to him had looked very much like a further ordeal.

They were days to make delightful memories, of penetration, shoeless, into the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy, of the peace and beauties of the famous tropical gardens of Peradeniya at Kandy, of the businesslike racecourse which at that time was in the loving care of Major "Pa" Turner, then, I believe, Assistant Superintendent of Forests in Ceylon. There was a visit to an Estate, specially to see the process of growing, tapping and making of rubber, and the thrills of the climb of the Ramboda Pass to Nuwara Eliya with Adam's Peak always beckoning one on. And then, at our highest point, the charms of Nuwara Eliya, with its own tropical gardens of Hackdalla, its quite good golf course, the early morning work on the racecourse, which at seven in the morning at the end of January was covered with a white rime frost. An hour later the wearing of a topee as a protection from the sun was an urgent necessity. I really think that rime frost at Nuwara Eliya was about the strangest sight of anything in the Island.

Mr. Peter Wright, one of the Stewards of the Turf Club, was very kind. He made me take my place in their stand, soon to be joined by that nice Irishman, Mr. J. J. Maher, who the previous year had claimed the breeding of the gallant Derby winner Manna. Certainly he had got the boat money

all right. At the previous Doncaster sales he had sold four yearlings for a total of 20,950 guineas, one of them for 12,000 guineas to Sir Victor Sassoon. They did no good to anyone, only to the breeder who was the vendor of them.

I must say I enjoyed the racing, though I had set out feeling that it was the last thing I wanted to look upon until duty should bring me up against it again. Yet one gets satisfaction out of seeing how they do things in racing in other lands. Some things they do better than we do. They have all the advantages of centralisation and of modern development. They give cheap racing, and the public can see it in comfort. But, of course, they must import all their horses, chiefly from England and Ireland, Arabs from the Persian Gulf and India. The breeding of the English and Irish horses was familiar enough to me and I recognised one or two old acquaintances, but for the most part they were ne'er-do-wells in the land of their birth that had come into their kingdom in another zone seven thousand miles away.

I cannot pretend to write with any seriousness of racing in South Africa. On the occasion of my visit I got no further in the short time at my disposal than Capetown and its precincts. The good people of Durban and Johannesburg would naturally say that knowledge of South African racing could not possibly be complete minus first-hand acquaintance with their racecourses when their seasons are in full swing. However, my idea of roaming abroad as relaxation from racecourses and racing folk is not to seek more of them. Yet it is not an unpleasant feeling one gets on a racecourse in another country that there is no work to do in the shortest possible time and that strangers are making you feel most welcome. I certainly count that as a form of relaxation.

If Durban and Johannesburg could not be visited, as I hope they may be one day, there was the chance of seeing Kenilworth's well-ordered course and of watching two days of racing at Milnerton. On one of those days the temperature was something like 104° in the shade, a dry heat, of course, but 104° nevertheless. I thought at the time I should have no difficulty in registering that in the memory. The Governor-General (Lord Clarendon) was there, and it was a pleasure to meet the High Commissioner (Sir Herbert Stanley) and his wife, a most admirable horsewoman. And among the

Stewards, whose kindness to this visitor was most marked, I have recollections of Mr. Ralph Price and Mr. Sydney Benjamin. The former was an adept at touching buttons. He never made a mistake.

Not, be it understood, to summon waiters, but to keep things moving. This he did from an electric switchboard which communicated with the number-board, and with the jockeys' room, the inmates of which were kept penned in there until required to pass, without any risk of molestation from unauthorised individuals, to the parade ring, there to receive their orders from their owners and trainers. They told me the English jockey, Carslake, much resented the police-like supervision when he rode there while on a visit. I am not surprised. It must have been a shock to one who is accustomed to the absolute freedom enjoyed by jockeys on English racecourses.

The button pusher let it be known when jockeys should mount and leave the paddock, long before the fixed time of the race. He signalled to the Tote offices when betting should stop, and he could communicate with the starter and the judge. I rather marvelled there should be real turf, though an elaborate system of watering from wells on the course explained the greenness of the track and the contrast it afforded with the arid country around. The starting was as good as I have seen anywhere, and the judging quick and decisive. A few of the horses were of nice class, and most of them not so nice. A tremendous import duty on thoroughbreds above a certain value was beginning to have its inevitable effects. South African racing stables and breeding studs must have replenishment from time to time from England or France. The oppressive duty was stifling all that.

One Sunday morning, when Sir Abe Bailey had no excuse for sitting by the telephone because London and Johannesburg Exchanges were observing the Sabbath, I accompanied him on his stout motor boat to Cape Point and back so that it could be said I had been south of the southernmost point of the continent of Africa. The Hon. Patrick Duncan, a member of the South African Parliament, was the other member of the party. He worked quietly with pencil and pad on his knees. South Africa was on the eve of introducing a Coalition Government with Hertzog at the head of it. Mr. Duncan became one of the Ministers. Sir Abe Bailey alternately

dozed in a long cane chair. The heavily-built boat chugged and splashed its way across the bays, past the naval station of Simonstown, until we could almost have stepped ashore at the Point, on which is a lighthouse. Penguins, overcome by curiosity, waited until the last moment before diving. They were serene moments enjoyed by a dozing millionaire financier, whose name will ever be linked up with the South Africa of yesterday and to-day, a prominent lawyer and politician, and, shall I say, an "also ran."

There was the return to Ruste Vrede for lunch. Sir Abe was giving one of his famous lunch parties, perhaps as famous as his dinner parties, when he gathers around him men (and sometimes women) of interest to others and of varying opinions. There is art in placing them at the long table in the middle of which sits the host. Neighbours must talk with each other at these lunches. So at this party there were the High Commissioner; Admiral Tweedy, commanding the naval forces at the Cape; several prominent politicians, including a son of the late President Steyn; Colonel Deney's Reitz, author of that classic, *Commando*, on the South African War, written from the Boer point of view; Lord Brabourne, who I was to see buried at sea some days after leaving Capetown; and one or two directors of the Standard Bank of South Africa. Wonderful food, much conversation, coffee, more talk, and then dispersal.

A year passed and it was time to go to sea again. Whither? It was decided for me by the P. and O. Company when they set aside their crack passenger ship, the *Viceroy of India*, to visit Madeira, St. Vincent in the Cape Verde Islands, Barbados and Trinidad in the West Indies, Bahia and Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, Sierra Leone in West Africa, Teneriffe in the Canary Islands, and finally Gibraltar. With the exception of Madeira, Teneriffe and Gibraltar this meant breaking new ground for me. What I chiefly remember about the long cruise is that almost the whole of this book was written in the course of it.

The reader shall not be wearied with long personal impressions. They are not exclusive to a racing journalist. But I may be permitted to write of three more racecourses, though no more racing. There was the one at Barbados, grand, I have no doubt, in the eyes of the islanders, but primitive in my rather more sophisticated mind. It was said to be a mile

round, though it did not look it. However, you are expected to believe so much that you are told when travelling to places hitherto unknown to one. Harry Wragg, the well-known English jockey, who had joined me ashore, looked at it and said just nothing at all. I found the process of manufacturing sugar from the cane more informative and diverting.

Trinidad's racecourse is a more ambitious affair and most pleasantly sited. Where the racehorses come from I do not know. Perhaps from Jamaica, Havana, or Florida. They do not seem to be stored on the island. Trinidad should be able to afford some racing. The island gives one the idea of being flourishing, far more so in fact than any other place of call, including Brazil. Oil and asphalt, the latter from its unique pitch lake, a show place for the traveller which he may or may not appreciate, are nowadays staple industries. The island itself is a mass of luxurious tropical vegetation. They grow much cocoa, which was all I sought to know about it.

The third racecourse I saw was at Rio de Janeiro. There was no racing going on, so that it was deserted, except for some workers, when Wragg and I found a way on to it after lunching at the Copacabana Palace Hotel. There seemed to be three tracks, one of turf, the others of dirt. Presumably one of the latter is for training purposes. It is oval except for a straightish five furlongs which links up with the straight of just about three furlongs, perhaps rather less. The main entrance is immensely imposing and the architecture of the buildings quite striking. I could see much beauty in it. Set in the centre of a square, which must hum with traffic on race days, is a huge monument of a horse symbolical of the racecourse and its purpose. The stands are elaborate and ornamental. I must presume also they are utilitarian because they are built on the modern system of obviating obstructive supports. Then the lawns, with their beds of flowers and semi-tropical shrubs and the shade-giving palms, must be most alluring. I know of no racecourse in England to compare with it in its amenities.

I got another view of it, but this time as a bird sees it from the summit of Corcovado on which is that most impressive monument "Christ the Redeemer." It looked tiny from that height, but so was almost every landmark in the most marvellous panorama I have ever looked upon, of bays and islands,

forming the wonderful harbour of Rio de Janeiro, of wooded hills, sugar cone peaks, and then the open sea with more islands to impose caution on the approaching navigator. Imagine the shades of blue of the water, and the play on the surf, and the deep shadows cast by brilliant sunshine. And for miles you looked down on the life of this capital of Brazil and its environs. A city of great beauty and enchantment.

It was a noble conception to build that huge monument of Christ on a landmark which can be seen from so many miles away. The outstretched arms of the Redeemer suggest the act of blessing the peoples of the capital. Those on ships can behold the statue fifteen or twenty miles away.

It is reached by a cog railway and then a short climb to a platform almost like a ship's bridge. From the end of it you look upwards to the giant figure towering eighty feet or so above you. It is of concrete. As I saw it the sun at the moment was almost hidden behind the head. The effect was to give a spiritual life to the image, for the partially hidden sun invested it with a glittering halo of fire. When night came and you looked upwards from the city you saw the statue bathed in flood lighting. This time the head almost obscured the full moon, and again one experienced the impression that a halo was actually there.

They were lazy days and lively nights for most travellers on the *Viceroy of India*. Especially unforgettable are the equatorial nights when the Southern Cross pales only in the bright light of the moon. And, writing of the nights, brings to mind one of singular beauty at Sierra Leone where we were ashore to witness a Tattoo performance by men of the Sierra Leone Battalion of the Royal West African Frontier Force. One moment complete darkness over the parade ground. The next the switching on of flood lighting revealed close on three hundred men of the native battalion on parade. Not a word of command was uttered. Physical exercises, standing and running, were done with never a blemish on the signals of one of the British officers, Mr. Turner, whose uncle, I discovered, was Brig.-General Turner, who for some years has ably managed Lord Woolavington's stud in Sussex. Then parade drill on light signals given by the commanding officer, Colonel Green, all carried through with a steadiness and precision worthy of the Guards. This is no exaggeration. It

was the finest display by a native regiment I have seen in any part of the world. One felt that here was something more than dull routine to interest and keep up to scratch both officers and men. A night to be remembered, apart from which Sierra Leone and St. Vincent can be wiped out of any future itineraries where I am concerned. I cannot recommend either as health resorts.



## CHAPTER III

## FAMOUS MANTON HORSES

An intimate pen sketch of Manton's famous trainer—Alec Taylor at home—Bayardo and his idiosyncrasies—Otto Madden's big bloomer after a trial—Bayardo and his trials—Danny Maher's fatal confidence at Goodwood—First impressions of Lemberg—Contrasts in fillies.

## I

LONG before it was my good fortune to know him and begin a friendship which has grown with the passing of the years, Alec Taylor, the trainer of Manton, had been one of my gods. I had worshipped him from afar even in the East in the early years of the century when one had to wait for the mail to read of the doings on English racecourses. I read of him as a "Wizard." Now what exactly did that convey?

Success won through the exercise of wizardry? The possession of secrets known only to the magician? They kept on referring to him in print as "The Wizard of Manton." Some flatterer with a pen, with a flair for flamboyancy, must have written it once upon a time. He probably repeated it, perhaps, indeed, borrowing from early Turf history in which the same thing was said about someone else.

The day came when Alec Taylor invited me to visit him at Manton. It was March in 1909. The great Bayardo was a three-year-old. He had been unbeaten as a two-year-old, winning all his seven races and a lot of money for the man who at that time raced under his *nom de course* of Mr. "Fairie." He was Mr. A. W. Cox, a rather strange man in many ways, one who neither sought nor expected popularity. I can well understand that he was an exceptional judge of the finest Havana cigars and of old brandy. He was brusque in his manner, and utterly careless of what you or I might be thinking

or saying about him. But he liked Alec Taylor, I imagine, about as much as he could like anyone. And the famous trainer understood him and paid him that respect which he showed to all his patrons. He was always their faithful and obedient servant, conscientious, painstaking, and exceedingly industrious, whose one world was Manton and its lonely windswept gallops, except when he had to venture out into the wider racing world outside.

I was to spend the night at Manton and be privileged to watch the horses at work the next morning. Now, I had always understood that Alec Taylor had no special liking for the Press, or at any rate that section of it which specialises in racing. Such was a popular notion which I discovered was built up on wrong premises. He had, and always has had, respect for the news-gatherer, and for the fair, well-informed and intelligent critic. But in a racing stable there must be confidences between owners and their trainers. He could not approve of leakages by which they might be broadcast for the benefit of those who were not paying the training bills, or, indeed, were putting nothing into racing, but were designing to take everything possible out of it. The trespassing, spying tout was certainly on his black list. So also were the disloyal stable lad and the intermediary between him and the tipping sheet.

The man who was to become my good friend must have approved my credentials or he would not have given me a bed and the invitation to look round his horses. It was an invitation that thrilled me. It was the entrée to a great training establishment made under the best possible auspices. I found him living there quietly, and, without the least ostentation, with his sister. The perfect combination of the bachelor and the maiden lady. So it had existed for years and is unbroken as I write this.

One side of the house was part of the square which formed the stable yard. There was a centre-piece of lawn. Through the opposite side of the square was the entrance arch surmounted by a stable clock which for years had announced the hours. The front of the house was heavily creeper-clad. Trees and shrubs had clustered closer and closer until they were darkening the interior. Inside there was the unmistakable smell of old furniture, carpets, and heavy curtains. It

was the home of two contented people, unworldly and unpretentious.

There had been days of frost and searching winds from the North and East, but there was cosiness by the glowing fire that night, a glass (or two) of port such as only a good judge could put on, and some reminiscences even then from the Oracle. I was with a man naturally gentle by nature, an iron rod ruler if necessity demanded in the stables, though not then, or, indeed, ever, did I see him driven to excesses through loss of temper. He was quiet, and, like his voice, soft spoken. The quiet trainer makes quiet horses. In that way confidence is created.

I shall never forget his appearance the next morning and how it flattened out any ideas that trainers were swell fellows in immaculately cut breeches and leggings. He had on the old-fashioned cloth leggings, cut wide, so that they spread over the boot-tops. They descended from unfashionably cut breeches. Really they were shut off by the famous old Melton blue coat he wore. Once it had a velvet collar. You could see that it was a faithful old friend that had never let him down and which it would break his heart to discard for ever. Some years later, when I was on a visit to him, he was still getting the last thread or two of wear out of it. It must have been ten or fifteen years later, because Bayardo was dead after a distinguished career at the stud. There had been some frost after a thaw and the ground was slippery.

"Come and have a peep at Bayardo's grave," he suggested, as we were leaving the house. The horse had been buried at the foot of a sloping garden and the way was down some rough steps. As he preceded me he slipped, and had I not broken his fall he would, I think, have been much hurt. He was soon up rubbing his shoulder. Saying it was "nothing," we went to the grave, and I, at any rate, conjured up memories of his deeds on the racecourse, even though he did not win either the Two Thousand Guineas or the Derby. Much later in the year the trainer told me how very seedy he had been through neuritis in his shoulder and arm, following the fall on that morning we had looked at the spot in the garden at Manton where Bayardo lies buried.

Now I should like to tell an intimate story of Bayardo, because what I have to tell has never previously been told,

certainly never in print. It has been pieced together after talks with my good friend, who, moreover, opened for me that secret book of trials.

Let me begin by relating an incident I personally witnessed which gave me an insight into the unusual character of a very unusual horse. Outstanding horses, especially fillies, have almost invariably some curious characteristic or another. The horses that cold morning in March of 1909 had just filed through the covered entrance into the stable yard on their return from exercise. All except one had dutifully gone to their respective boxes. The exception was the great horse himself. There he was, standing as stubbornly as a mule, just standing and anxious, evidently, to make the minimum fuss about it and unwishful of annoying anyone. They could not get him into his box. Every now and then he had the mood to be thus obstinate and mulish.

What was to be done? Why, nothing but wait. Wait until Bayardo thought the moment had arrived to enter. Until it had done so he would pay no heed to any amount of coaxing. He blinked contemptuously at the offering of a wisp of grass which he knew would be held in advance of him until the stable door had closed on him. He seemed to know that they dare not be rough with him. After all, he was the favourite for the Derby with outstanding prospects of winning the Triple Crown of Two Thousand Guineas, Derby and St. Leger.

Once inside the box he would often indulge in a curious habit he had of knocking the manger with his chin. They could hear him at it out in the yard. The boys called it "Bayardo's Drum." He would do it while being travelled to race meetings and as a consequence there was quite a hard scale on the chin. Can such odd kinks be communicated from father to son? The same thing in a minor way was done by Bayardo's brilliant son Gainsborough.

Bayardo had other queer ways too. I have seen Danny Maher, more than once, give up in despair trying to get him to canter past the stands at Newmarket on the way to the start of a race. He seemed to make up his mind that he would not go. It was not that he was afraid of what was in store, for there never was a gamer horse. He would keep on until he dropped if necessary. It evidently amused him to think that

he might be causing a lot of worry. He certainly knew that Danny would not lose his temper with him and set about him with his whip. Other jockeys would not have shown such forbearance. Well, in the end they had to get the Stewards' permission to let him be taken behind the stands and so on to the racecourse below. Did he mind passing in and out of the cabs and motors? Not a bit. He had got his way. His jockey was smiling at him. And he duly won his race.

Bayardo was a bay or brown that measured 15.3½ hands while in training, and was just about 16 hands when he went to the stud. You would not have thought him specially attractive in his early days, but the more you looked at him the more you had to admit there was a great deal to like about him. All the essential parts of a racehorse he had. And he always knew who he was from the moment he was broken as a yearling. He seemed able to do anything he liked with other horses, whether they were just cantering or galloping.

The son of Bay Ronald was a long low horse, nothing flashy about him, but everything well balanced and in true proportions. Two points about him I shall always remember. He stood over a bit at the knees. The conformation became more pronounced as he got older as, indeed, it usually does. Then he had lop ears, which do not lend beauty to a horse, though they so often belong to the good and honest horse. What he did not have was good feet, and as it happened they were the chief cause of his undoing during the first half of that year, causing him to miss classic honours at Newmarket and Epsom. The feet were bad especially in front. They were fleshy and very sensitive, so that Alec Taylor had great difficulty in keeping him sound. The difficulty first became serious, as I have said, in the early part of his three-year-old career.

But before going on with the career of Bayardo, I must relate the story of the colt's first trial as a two-year-old, and how Otto Madden, a leading jockey of that time, made the biggest "bloomer" of his life, though most unwittingly. That year (1908) Mr. Cox did not have any specially retained jockey. He was not very well and could not come to Manton and see Bayardo tried, as had been arranged with the trainer, during the Epsom Summer meeting. However, the owner

wrote to Alec Taylor and suggested he should collect a few jockeys at Epsom, Madden among them, and take them down to Manton for the night and ride in the trial the next morning.

As the jockeys had to catch a train at eight o'clock the next morning from Marlborough it will be understood that the trial had to be at cock-crow, so to say. Here is the result as I copied it from the very private trial book at Manton and now reproduce with the trainer's permission:

June 8th, 1908.	Five furlongs.	6-30 a.m.
Bayardo, 2 yrs.	— 8 st. 8 lb.	— Madden
Seedcake, 3 yrs.	— 8 st. 8 lb.	— Toon
Smuggler, 2 yrs.	— 7 st. 1 lb.	— Hulse
Lady Vista, 2 yrs.	— 8 st. 5 lb.	— Broadwood.
Cellerette, 2 yrs.	— 8 st. 8 lb.	— Hill
Highness, 2 yrs.	— 8 st. 5 lb.	— Baker
Merry Masham, 2 yrs.	— 8 st. 5 lb.	— Clark
Sibola colt, 2 yrs.	— 8 st. 8 lb.	— Trigg

Won easily by six lengths; one length second and third.

Alec Taylor did not see Madden again until reaching Ascot. Before breakfast on the Tuesday he saw him and said: "Of course you know what you have to ride?" The jockey replied that he was not quite sure and pulled out his book. Together they looked at the programme. Said the trainer pointing to Bayardo's name in the New Stakes on the Thursday: "There's the horse you have to ride."

"Which horse?" rejoined Madden.

"Why, Bayardo," explained the trainer.

"But," said Madden, "I don't ride Bayardo."

"Yes you do. That's the one."

Then it dawned on Madden that he had done something awful. He thought he had ridden the old horse (Seedcake) in the Manton trial, and because he had won so easily he believed that the two-year-olds could not be worth tuppence apiece. So he had engaged himself to ride another horse in the New Stakes. Through that mistake he lost all the riding on Bayardo. They gave the ride to Bernard Dillon and Bayardo won in a canter. Six other high-class races he won as a two-year-old worth £11,000. And he went into winter quarters

unbeaten. He was destined to fail for both the Two Thousand Guineas and the Derby, but he still managed to win £44,500 in stakes before his racing career was brought to a close.

The reader, I believe, will be interested if I continue with the intimate story of Bayardo's career, because he was certainly one of the great horses on the Turf in the twentieth century. They have been very few in number. Let me go back to the very early days of his three-year-old career. It was then that the mischief was done that brought about the undoing of the winter favourite for the Derby.

I have explained that his feet were fleshy and shelly. Winter that year lingered long in the lap of Spring, and there was much malice and hate in the long prevalence of northerly and easterly winds. So the best of the famous Manton gallops became hard, and the growing of the new grass was delayed. The racehorse in training responds to the warmth of the sun. Some need it more than others. Bayardo had to be trained under such difficult conditions. Obviously he could not have thrived. I can imagine the anxiety of his most conscientious trainer.

One frosty morning he was fooling about and jibbing. He slipped and lamed himself. That might not have been serious, but always there was the foot trouble which had to be watched most carefully. Alec Taylor did not want to run him for the Two Thousand Guineas. Mr. Cox wanted him to run. He was a man that liked his own way. He was obeyed. Because he was Bayardo they betted odds on him, "they" being the professionals who probably do not lose in the long run by adhering to a principle of sticking to a winning horse until it loses. If this little bit of history had been available then they would have saved their money and might even have profited over the victory of King Edward's Minoru.

On April 21st there was the following trial at Manton, though the trainer was satisfied Bayardo could not be at his best:

Bayardo, 3 yrs.	-	-	-	-	9 st.	5 lb.
Seedcake, 4 yrs.	-	-	-	-	7 st.	12 lb.
Maid of the Mist, 3 yrs.				-	9 st.	2 lb.
Moscato, 3 yrs.	-	-	-	-	8 st.	5 lb.

One mile. Won easily by a length; a head between second and third.

By the way, they must have thought pretty highly at that time of the filly Maid of the Mist to have asked her to take on Bayardo at only the weight-for-sex allowance of 3 lb. She was the first of the produce of the great mare Sceptre, and had been sired by Cyllene. At one time Sir William Bass owned both sire and dam, and bred and owned Maid of the Mist. Cyllene had then sired a Derby winner in Cicero. He was destined to have the Derby winner of that year (1909) in Minoru, in Lemberg in the following year, and a fourth only two years later in the grey filly Tagalie. Maid of the Mist passed into the possession of Lord Astor, and became one of the founders of the splendid stud he has built up. Mated with Torpoint she became the dam of Hamoaze (dam of Buchan), Sunny Jane (winner of the New Oaks in the War), and Craig an Eran (winner of the Two Thousand Guineas and second for the Derby).

To return for a moment to Bayardo. It was not until a fortnight before the Derby was due to be run that he began to please his trainer. Could he possibly make up the leeway in the short time remaining? In his heart, I am sure, Alec Taylor did not think so. Yet there could be no mistake now about the way the horse was coming on. It created hope in varying degrees. Some sanguine folk want so little encouragement to send them off their balance.

Bayardo finished fifth. That year there was a favourite in the American horse Sir Martin, owned by Mr. Louis Winans and ridden by "Skeets" Martin. Why he should have been favourite goodness knows. But there it was. He seems to have fascinated most of the big money backers. He fell while making the downhill turn of Tattenham Corner. Would he, one wonders, have justified his favouritism? Personally, I much doubt it. There may be less doubt in the case of the French grey horse, Holocauste, who fell with Tod Sloan about the same spot and broke a leg, when, according to his jockey, he had definitely got the odds-on favourite, Flying Fox, well beaten. But that happened ten years before the Derby of which I am writing.

When he fell Sir Martin badly interfered with Bayardo who was tracking him, and Danny Maher had to snatch him up. He abandoned hope from that moment, and the pictures of the finish show him pulling the horse up while Minoru and



Louviers were fighting out their dramatic finish, out of which the colt in the Royal colours came victorious by a head.

Bayardo's star was high in the heavens again when Ascot was reached a fortnight later. It never waned until more than a year later when Magic beat him for the Goodwood Cup. They laid the blame on Maher without mincing matters in the slightest. Said Alec Taylor, most reasonable of men and temperate in criticism at all times: "Maher let Magic get a furlong in front and never attempted to close the tremendous gap until reaching the comparatively short straight there is at Goodwood. And he was giving away all that weight too——"

"He was a horse of moods," once observed the trainer, reflecting on that Goodwood fiasco during one of our talks. "He could be very different some days to others. But he would always run his race out. I think the greatest performance I ever saw a horse do was put up by Bayardo on one occasion. Maher had him lengths and lengths behind, and it looked impossible for him to win. Even then he had to be brought up wide on the outside and be given a hard finish to win a head when he could have won by many lengths. I always told Maher the day would come when something awful would happen through overdoing the waiting and waiting.

"But I know the horse too well," Danny would reply. "He doesn't like to be in front."

"The reply to that was," went on the trainer, "what happened in the race for the Gold Cup at Ascot. Bayardo just carried him to the front, and the more he got in front the further he won by. That upset Maher's theory once and for all, but he had forgotten the lesson when we got to Goodwood later in the summer."

. . . . .

I have written of my first sight of Bayardo as a three-year-old and how I found him in one of those won't-go-into-the-box moods. Much later in the morning Alec Taylor and I stood watching the young two-year-olds walking in a big ring on some sheltered ground not far from the stable. There were fleeting shafts of pale winter sunshine, but there was a bite in the wind, and the young thoroughbreds who were to make their debut on the racecourse in the fast approaching season were well rugged up. My friend had not left his faithful Melton

overcoat behind. An equally faithful grey cob probably as old as the overcoat had, however, been left behind. We were on foot.

In the string there walked a potential Derby winner. He stood out even then from his fellows, catching my eye and awaking in me instant admiration even before I knew of his breeding. It was Lemberg, and specially interesting because he was Bayardo's half-brother. The elder horse had been sired by Bay Ronald and produced by the mare Galicia, a daughter of Galopin who had gained immortal fame as the sire of St. Simon. Now, on breeding alone, you were entitled to the highest expectations of Lemberg, but we well know that breeding alone will not suffice if there be not also the essentials of conformation, soundness, courage, and action. There was Lemberg in his immature state yet showing himself as a classy individual. He was attractive then as he was to the critic throughout his racing life.

He was bigger at every stage than his distinguished half-brother. Perhaps that is because he was a trifle long on the leg. It was apt to show itself through training. The hyper-critical might have alleged he was a little bit weak about his hocks, but, really, there was not much the matter with him and he was certainly a very nice horse to deal with. He was game without being quite the bulldog that Bayardo was.

The first time he was tried he showed he was a good one. His trainer would, I fancy, have been much amazed had he not done so. And, as for his owner, what astonishing luck to be sure that the gods should have given to him two such splendid horses in successive years and from the same mare too! The programme mapped out for him was precisely the same at the outset as that carried out with Bayardo, even to being tried with the same older horse.

Here are the details of his first trial as a two-year-old:

June 8th, 1909.				Five furlongs.			
Lemberg, 2 yrs.	—	—	—	8 st. 8 lb.	—	—	1
Benwhat, 4 yrs.	—	—	—	8 st. 3 lb.	—	—	2
Seedcake, 4 yrs.	—	—	—	8 st. 8 lb.	—	—	3
Maid of Corinth, 2 yrs. and two or three others.							

Won easily by one and a half length; three lengths between second and third.

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All went off perfectly at Ascot. He won the New Stakes as Bayardo had done the year before. One of those beaten by him was Mr. Jack Joel's Sunningdale, a big chestnut horse that was much fancied by his owner and very clever trainer, Charles Morton.

I do not propose following in detail the career of Lemberg. We know that Danny Maher rather than Neil Gow beat him a few inches for the Two Thousand Guineas. But the best story of all had to be told at Epsom, as it can be told of any horse that triumphs. There was no doubt about the superiority this time, though I have related elsewhere that excuses could be made for Neil Gow that day.

Lemberg came through his trial all right for the Derby, and, having done so, they were a fearless band of Mantonites that took on the foe at Epsom. Here are the details of the trial:

May 28th, 1910.				One and a half miles.			
Lemberg, 3 yrs.	—	—	8 st. 8 lb.	—	—	1	
Maid of Corinth, 3 yrs.	—	—	8 st. 5 lb.	—	—	2	
Rosedrop, 3 yrs.	—	—	8 st. 5 lb.	—	—	3	

Won comfortably. The second just beat the third.

Now, the interesting feature of this trial in the light of what happened at Epsom is not so much the success of Lemberg, because that was looked for, but the showing made by the two fillies who you will see were only getting the sex allowance from the colt. There was Maid of Corinth related to Maid of the Mist, because she was the second foal of her dam Sceptre. And there was Rosedrop. The two fillies were in striking contrast. Maid of Corinth, extremely nervy, that would worry herself to a shadow on a racecourse. Rosedrop, placid and easy-going, and, like most of that kind, better in public when stimulated by the excitements of the racecourse than in private. She won the Oaks, and thus contributed to the Manton stable's splendid double event at Epsom that year.

## CHAPTER IV

### FAMOUS MANTON HORSES

Halcyon days at Manton—Gay Crusader first of two Derby winners—Details of his trials—His last fatal gallop—How Gainsborough went to Manton—His owner had to race him—A comparison with Gay Crusader—Sceptre and her strange ways—Joe Childs and Bayuda—How she nearly missed the chance of winning the Oaks—The first Lord Manton—His affection for Love in Idleness.

#### II

**W**ONDERFUL Turf history was being made at Manton about this time. Only seven years before Bayardo's three-year-old days the stable had had seven winning horses of twelve races, representing a value of £2305. Bayardo had largely helped the immense leap forward to total winnings in 1909 of £47,165. That year twenty-three horses had won forty-seven races. Precisely the same number of races were won in 1910, but then Lemberg had registered his Derby triumph and Bayardo kept on his brilliant winning way. And so the total prize money soared to £52,929. Rosedrop also had won the Oaks. Now note the influence of those three. Bayardo became the sire of the two War Derby winners, Gay Crusader and Gainsborough, and, therefore, the champion sire in 1917 and 1918, in which years racing was immensely restricted by the War Cabinet. Lemberg became the champion four years later, while Rosedrop, as the result of her mating with Bayardo, produced Gainsborough. It is common knowledge how Gainsborough has taken rank as one of the outstanding sires of this century.

The great trainer of these celebrities stuck to his Melton overcoat nevertheless. Success could never spoil him. The world outside Manton had no fascinations and few interests for him. If it ever beckoned to him he seldom heeded the invitation. Hard work and concentration could never be

reconciled in his outlook on life with social distractions. He could not even be driven out of his lair to take a holiday, though all his patrons at one time or another must have urged him to do so. Holidaying would have meant unhappiness to him.

One day I rode over from the bungalow which the late George Edwardes had built for him in the days when his horses were trained at Ogbourne. Gordon Richards had his home there for a time after he had passed through his apprenticeship with Martin Hartigan in the Ogbourne stable and had become launched on his brilliant riding career. I dropped down into the Rockley valley, looking as I went across at Manton not more than a mile away. The house and stables were lost in a big clump of trees and shrubs. But I could see a string of horses walking in file and silhouetted on the skyline made by the crest of the Down. They were on the gallop on which Alec Taylor's father had twice tried Teddington for the Derby in 1851, the second time because they thought the first result too good to be true.

At the foot of the Manton property, close to the Rockley Road, there were some rough boxes. In them at that time were some yearlings, just arrived from Doncaster, that had cost many thousands of guineas. Manton had just found a new patron in Mr. J. Watson, who was later the first Lord Manton. Obviously the place suggested the title he took. Lemonora was one of the yearlings I saw that morning. He was there, like the rest, for purposes of isolation in case they should have brought any infectious ills with them from the Doncaster sale paddocks. I was destined to see and hear much more of Lemonora. He was not of really high class, though he won the Grand Prix de Paris at a time, however, when racing in France had not got back to the normal after the War. He also was placed in the Derby and won the Newmarket Stakes.

I rode on to join my good friend, and possibly it was on that occasion he told me things about the distinguished horses he had produced during the War and on which I had never set eyes, for well-understood reasons. Gay Crusader and Gainsborough had come and gone. They had passed on to the stud. We know of their stud careers. We know that Gainsborough proved infinitely the better sire. Which was the better racehorse? Who more likely to answer the question than their trainer?

For a long time I could never get him to give an opinion carrying any conviction as to which was the best horse he ever trained. He wavered between Bayardo and Gay Crusader. Then one day he said he really thought the son might have been a better horse than the father if he had been able to train him as a four-year-old. That disposes of any question as between Gay Crusader and Gainsborough. Why did he come to that conclusion? "Because," he said, "he was equally brilliant whether at five furlongs or two miles; in fact I really don't know how good he was. It was just a disaster that I was not able to train him as a four-year-old and prove it to the world."

Some will say that the classic winners in the years of the War had not much to beat in consequence of racing having to undergo drastic suppression. There were fewer horses in training, and while the Two Thousand Guineas, as always, was run at Newmarket, the New Derby and the New Oaks, as also the September Stakes, could be no other than counterfeit affairs for what in normal years takes place at Epsom and Doncaster. It is certainly rather odd that in four years of wartime racing confined to Newmarket three horses should have won the substituted races for the Triple Crown. They were Pommern, Gay Crusader, and Gainsborough. Yet as I write the last horse to win such honours to be won at Newmarket, Epsom, and Doncaster was Rock Sand as far back as 1903.

I am satisfied that Pommern was worthy of his outstanding successes as a three-year-old. Entries for his Two Thousand Guineas were made in the year before the outbreak of war. Entries for War Derbys were made not long before the races were decided on the July course at Newmarket. After all, that notable trio of winners could do no more than they did. And I have no doubt Alec Taylor took into account the unique conditions brought about by the upheaval when he so exalted Gay Crusader. He was certainly a big surprise packet in the sense that when he first arrived at Manton as a yearling no one had the ghost of an idea that he was going to be such a devastating winner. That was because he was not an attractive looking yearling, and such are not usually gazed at intently both in their boxes and when at exercise. He was rather on the small side, shelly, and somewhat mean looking in appearance.

The change came in the Spring of his two-year-old days.

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He suddenly began to show a big improvement and in June of 1916 he figured in this trial:

Gay Crusader, 2 yrs. —	—	8 st. 12 lb.	—	—	†
Aleli, 2 yrs. —	—	8 st. 12 lb.	—	—	†
Lady Minta, 3 yrs. —	—	9 st. 5 lb.	—	—	3
Wanda M., 2 yrs. —	—	8 st. 3 lb.	—	—	4
Telephus, 2 yrs. —	—	8 st. 5 lb.	—	—	5

Five furlongs. Gay Crusader and Aleli ran a dead heat; a neck between dead-heaters and third.

Soon after that trial Gay Crusader developed sore shins and his debut as a two-year-old had to be postponed to the autumn. On October 10th he was tried again over six furlongs with this result:

Gay Crusader, 2 yrs. —	—	8 st.	—	—	1
Koum Kaleb, 2 yrs. —	—	7 st.	—	—	2
Aleli, 2 yrs. —	—	8 st.	—	—	3
Kilbay, 2 yrs. —	—	7 st. 7 lb.	—	—	4
Lord Bay, 2 yrs. —	—	7 st. 7 lb.	—	—	5

Won by six lengths; a head between second and third.

From two to three years of age the improvement continued; indeed there never was a horse at Manton that became so transformed both in appearance and ability. Instead of being unattractive he had grown into a really beautiful looking horse. There was nothing superfluous about him, neither bone nor flesh. He was the absolute racing machine, and, what is more, he loved racing. All the racing he did had, of course, to be done at Newmarket, whither he would go light-heartedly, always to win, and return looking even better than when he went away. Always he did the right thing, and especially did he do it in the right place. There you have in Gay Crusader the model racehorse. What testimonials to be lavished on one individual! With all these virtues there was a perfect temperament, making it quite a pleasure to have anything to do with him whether in the stable or out of it.

Gay Crusader's first test at home in 1917 was on April 25th over a mile. This is what happened:

Gay Crusader, 3 yrs.	8 st. 11 lb.	Madden	1
Telephus, 3 yrs.	8 st. 11 lb.	Donoghue	2
Kwang Su, 4 yrs.	10 st. 3 lb.	Cooper	3

Gay Crusader won by two lengths. Kwang Su broke a blood vessel. The trial winner went to Newmarket to win the Two Thousand Guineas. Before he was due to run for the New Derby the trainer staged this trial, with the colt still making headway:

June 9th. One and a quarter miles.

Gay Crusader, 3 yrs.—	—	8 st. 7 lb.	—	—	1
Telephus —	—	8 st. 7 lb.	—	—	2
Haki, 5 yrs. —	—	7 st. 7 lb.	—	—	3
Cairngillan, 3 yrs. —	—	7 st. 7 lb.	—	—	4

Won by three and a half lengths; head between second and third.

The reigning Manton champion got better and better. Certainly no horse enjoyed life more than he did. He wanted plenty of food and then, being a perfectly winded horse, he only wanted a light preparation. We arrive now at what should have been the beginning of his four-year-old career. The trainer did not want to subject him to a gallop which would amount to a trial. I assume that he did not consider him forward enough at that date, but Mr. Cox, his owner, insisted on having the gallop. I have remarked elsewhere that he was a man who saw to it that his wishes were observed. So the evening before the gallop he arrived at Manton, bringing his favourite jockey, at that time Donoghue. Never did Gay Crusader gallop more brilliantly. Owner, trainer, and jockey were delighted. In the words of his trainer "he went like a steam-engine." There was the certain knowledge that he would win all his races as a four-year-old. One was to be the substitute affair for the Ascot Gold Cup.

He had pulled up well. He had walked home an apparently sound horse. That same evening they knew the worst. On being visited at evening stables they made the horrifying discovery that he had sprained a tendon. It meant the end of his racing career. I saw him more than once at the Manton stud in later years. Once there were in the same paddock waiting to be mated with him an Oaks winner and a St. Leger winner. Two striking contrasts in mares they were: Love in Idleness, the Oaks winner, diminutive, but every little bit of her wonderfully good, Keysoe, an out-size in mares. The horse had marvellous chances at the stud. They fixed his fee at 400



guineas, and breeders rushed in to give it. Now when a breeder pays that figure as the service fee he is not likely to send his worst mare to the horse.

Gay Crusader did, in fact, have the cream of the mares and, of course, he got many winners. He also got a great many horses that were frankly disappointing. As this book is meant to be a truthful record of the lives and characters of the outstanding horses of my time, I cannot honestly say that Gay Crusader was a stud success. Some of his progeny had characteristics which were in no way related to those possessed by the horse himself during his training days. They got a bad name among trainers, and, gradually, his star began to wane as also his list of nominations to show a shrinkage, but not until he had been given wonderful opportunities. The last time I saw him he had grown old and his temper had become frayed. Only his man appeared able to get on with him. He was like a horse that had some desire to kick a fly off his near side ear with his off hind-leg.

Yet soon after peacetime racing had been resumed Mr. J. B. Joel would, I believe, have given £100,000 for him. I know because I was asked to make some overtures. I can only assume that Mr. A. R. Cox, who had succeeded to his brother's very considerable estate, together with his horses, did not want to entertain the notion of selling when he said he "might" consider £120,000 and two free subscriptions to the horse every year. Mr. Joel was doubtless relieved in following years that such absurd terms should have been suggested, though I doubt whether Mr. Cox ever regretted that he did not think about the £100,000 offer. He can be said to have been commercially justified, for you can make a lot of money out of the earnings of a 400-guinea sire, year after year, even allowing for the lumps to be handed over to the Inland Revenue in the form of taxation.

. . . . .

I never saw Gainsborough until he had been some years at Lady James Douglas's stud. She had bred him, and, incidentally, nearly sold him as a yearling. Here again you will see how big things turn on what look like small things at the time. The dam, *Rosedrop*, she had bought from Sir William Bass. She was an Oaks winner, but no one could claim that she was a

distinguished one. There had been the mating with Bayardo, Gainsborough being the result.

In 1916, when the colt was a yearling, Lady James Douglas wrote to Alec Taylor requesting him to visit her stud and give her an opinion about the colt. "You trained both his sire and dam," she said, "and, therefore, you should know more about him than anyone else." The lady explained that she always sold the yearlings she bred, and that the one to be given the name of Gainsborough would be in the contingent to be offered at Newmarket. She proposed, however, to put a reserve on him, and perhaps Alec Taylor would be good enough to advise as to that.

The trainer liked the colt, though he found him to be rather long in the pasterns, and somewhat heavy looking about his shoulders. Altogether a stuffy sort of young thoroughbred. Still there was much to like about him.

"Now tell me what reserve to put on him," said Lady James, "and remember I want to sell him."

"I should not take less than 2000 guineas," rejoined the trainer, though he was mentioning a pretty high figure as a war-time price with grave doubt about that time as to the future of racing.

"Very well, I will put a reserve on him of 2000. Now, supposing he doesn't make it, will you have him at Manton and train him for me?"

"Yes, I shall be glad to have him."

The colt duly went into the ring and was passed out, having failed to reach the reserve. Arrangements were being made to send him on to Manton when Lady James came up and said she had been offered 2000 privately. Should she sell? Again, a few moments later, she came to say the offer had been increased to 2500 guineas. What should she do about it?

"Well," remarked the trainer, "don't let them have him. They've had their chance to buy him and they would not take it. Keep him."

So that was how Gainsborough went to Manton to make a big name for himself and to bring in a fortune for Lady James Douglas in sires' fees. For he sired classic winners and none more brilliant than Hyperion, the shining star of 1933. Seeing him, after he had been at the stud some years, I could well

understand the description I had been given of him, that he rather suggested the blood hunter type plus the quality. It was in his general conformation and his generous endowment of muscle, good bone, the strong short back, and fine limbs. He had much more Bayardo character than the lighter-framed Gay Crusader by the same sire.

During his time in training he showed himself to be a Christian of a horse. He simply could not do wrong because he was always sensible, placid, and delightful to have anything to do with. I expect the lad that "did" him at Manton absolutely adored him. As a two-year-old he was nothing like a good horse. At that time I am told one could have criticised his shoulders and his thick-set appearance. But then they fined down, leaving him with quite perfect conformation for his type. He was a beautiful goer, though Gay Crusader is given the palm for the best-actioned horse ever at Manton. Before the Two Thousand Guineas they had this trial at Manton:

April 24th, 1918. One mile.

Gainsborough, 3 yrs	9 st. 7 lb.	Donoghue	1
Blink, 3 yrs.	9 st. 7 lb.	Colling	2
Prince Chimay, 3 yrs.	9 st.	Wourall	3
Bapaume, 3 yrs.	9 st. 7 lb.	Brennan	0
Thermogene, 3 yrs.	8 st. 7 lb.	Madden	0

Won by half a length.

There was no trial prior to his easy win of the New Derby.

Lady James Douglas has, indeed, been a fortunate lady in the very striking success of her breeding stud. A very little time was to elapse between the triumphs of Gainsborough and the Oaks victory of her filly Bayuda in the very early post-war days. I must say something about her if only because of illustrating the chances of trials proving valueless. If Alec Taylor had listened to the very experienced jockey, Joe Childs, who at that time was riding for Lady James, then it is certain Bayuda would never even have been started for the Oaks. Some time before the Epsom meeting of 1919 Childs went down to Manton to ride her in a good gallop. She carried him so badly that when he got off her back he said. "It's no use running her. She's got no earthly chance."

I can imagine him saying it. When horse or man offended him he would never hesitate to fly up and let the world know what he thought about it. He followed up his dismissal of her chance by going so far as to say he would rather not ride her. She simply was "No good!" Now the trainer was not at all satisfied that the gallop could be right and he told Childs so. A few days later he gave her another gallop, this time with a stable lad on her back, accompanied by the same horses and over the same distance. The difference in her form was at least a 2 st. improvement.

After this, of course, a decision to run was promptly arrived at, and I am sure no one was more surprised than Childs when she won in such convincing style. He rode a race entirely typical of his methods when a fair distance had to be covered. Distance cannot be indiscriminately conceded at Epsom, but the jockey waited until they were well in the straight before bringing her out, and then she swept to the front to show that anyone who stands rigorously on trials will not in the long run do much good. Bayuda was a smallish mare, though not so limited in stature as the other Manton Oaks winner, Love in Idleness, about that time. But she had quality and was a true stayer.

It seems odd that Lady James, in a sense, can be said to have fluked her classic victories. I have shown what a near thing it was about selling Gainsborough as a yearling. And in the case of Bayuda there might have been no Oaks triumph had the trainer not been filled with doubt about the gallop that so disgusted Joe Childs and then made up his mind to test the filly again.

How often it happens that the most unlikely mares achieve greatness at the stud, while the stars of the racecourse so seldom produce their like. Bayuda had nothing like a stud career commensurate with her ability as a racehorse. Gay Laura was not much, and one familiar with her character might have expected her to prove a bundle of trouble at the stud. Yet her first foal proved to be Gay Crusader.

While on the subject of famous mares no memories of Alec Taylor and his great stable would be complete without mention of Sceptre. She stands out to-day as one of the greatest mares of the century, I think, perhaps, the greatest, bearing in mind what she went through. She must have had a marvellous constitution, or four of the five classic races, as well as other

distinguished performances, would not stand to her name to-day. A much respected authority once told me that it was the rarest possible thing for a high-class filly to be devoid of some odd characteristic or two. They might almost be described as kinks. Certainly Sceptre was no exception.

For a mare she was markedly masculine in character and extremely intelligent. No mare could have been easier to do with than she was—until strong work was turned on and then she got peevish, snappy, and highly strung. She seemed to know who was responsible for the hard work imposed on her and let the trainer know it when he went into her box.

I happened to be at Poona in India when Sir William Bass bought her off Mr. R. S. Sievier. Sir William's regiment, the 10th Hussars, were stationed at Mhow. He came to Poona to ride in some pony races and put in some polo. It was from India, therefore, that through Mr. Arthur Chetwynd he negotiated for the purchase of Sceptre. He gave £25,000 for her. Mr. Chetwynd was at Liverpool when he sent a wire to Alec Taylor saying he had bought the mare and would he take her to train at Manton? For these impressions of her subsequent to winning the Hardwicke Stakes at Ascot I am indebted to Alec Taylor.

He has told me that she was poor in condition when she came to him. She had had a very hard time. Every day for a while she drank a gallon or two of new milk, though he does not think she was at her best in that most memorable race for the Eclipse Stakes when the Derby winner of the previous year, Ard Patrick, beat her a neck, and the Derby winner of that year, Rock Sand, was beaten many lengths by the two older horses. I wish I could say that I had been an eye-witness of the race. Many have told me that Sceptre ought to have won, and that she did not do so was because her jockey, Hardy, was out-generalled by Otto Madden. That jockey, at any rate, is of the opinion, for this is what he told Sceptre's trainer after the race: "I could see," he said, "the mare was going to beat me, but luckily for me Hardy made his effort a bit too soon. Then he realised what he had done and he eased her again. As he did so I asked Ard Patrick to go for all he was worth. I got first run in that way and just got there to win."

There was her amazing performance when she won the

Duke of York Handicap at Kempton Park. Actually she was lame on the morning of the race and they could not put racing plates on her. Instead they had to run her in exceptionally soft ground in heavy working shoes. Her trainer was desperately worried and anxious. In the straight Madden got boxed in on her. She was left with an incredible amount of leeway to make up. It was the first time Madden had ridden her, and he was very nervous before he had been thrown up into the saddle. He had only ridden her in work. About the last words he said to the trainer before leaving the paddock were that he would not be beaten on her for anything.

"You'll be all right if you don't get shut in," were the last warning words given to him. Yet shut in he was, three times, and it was only in the last stride in a tense and dramatic scene that she caught Happy Slave, who was receiving forty pounds, and beat him a head.

Mr. Joseph Watson, a power in the soap-manufacturing world, was the owner of Manton. He was soon afterwards to become Lord Manton. Alec Taylor has done many shrewd and profitable things in his time, but especially did he show foresight when selling the stables, farmlands, and gallops to a speculator when values after the War were at their peak. Lord Manton bought from the speculator soon afterwards and appeared to be well satisfied with his end of the bargain. The pity is that he is not alive to-day to have enjoyed his ownership of the property, because up to the time of his sudden death in the hunting-field he had put a great deal of money into the place and into the purchase of much high-priced bloodstock. But he was at least spared to win the Oaks with his grand little filly, Love in Idleness, and enjoy those successes I have mentioned with Lemonora as well as with certain fillies of exceptional note.

It was at Ascot in 1919 that Sir John Thursby, who had a few horses at Manton, told Alec Taylor that he would like to introduce him to a great friend of his. The friend proved to be Mr. Joseph Watson. He asked the trainer to buy him a good two-year-old, whereupon he was told that he was asking for something very hard to find for purchase purposes. "If," he explained, "a man has the luck to come by a good two-year-old he generally likes to stick to it." "Well," Mr. Watson remarked, "get hold of one if you can. I'm in no hurry."

It was not long afterwards that Alec Taylor made the discovery that Mr. Watson had purchased Manton, having obviously given a profit to Mr. Waterhouse, the speculator, or it may be that Mr. Waterhouse had been acting for him all the time. Then did he inform the trainer that, having acquired the property, he would now like him to go to Doncaster and buy him some yearlings. Well do I remember the occasion. There was Alec Taylor's head moving slightly to signify increases in the bidding for some of the choicest lots. Who, I wondered, could he be bidding for? It seemed unlikely that any known patron of the stable was thus launching out. Lord Astor, Lady James Douglas, Mr. Washington Singer, and Sir John Thursby bred their own horses, though Mr. Singer every now and again would make a yearling purchase as he did when Alec Taylor years later paid 3000 guineas for Orwell.

It must be a new man coming into the stable. It was my job to find out. They did not want his real identity known. As if anything on the big scale could be kept a secret for long from the Press! The auctioneers, who, of course, knew, let it be known that the buyer was a "Mr. Preston." That "blind" held good for just a few hours. After that the world was informed that the speculator in yearlings was Mr. Joseph Watson, whose name was now to be known far outside the world of soap.

I recall him as an extremely nice and amiable man. He was a most able business man. He was sensible and clever in his racing, because he did not claim to know all there was to know about it when he came into the sport of racing and the industry of horse-breeding. He was content to place much reliance on the experience and brains of his chosen trainer. I realised that he was an excellent judge of a racehorse, and quite an exceptionally good judge of a hunter.

Bought at Doncaster on his behalf were Love in Idleness, Lemonora, Tetrabazzia, Trash, Two Step, Sister-in-Law, Lady Juror, and Marissa. Love in Idleness was something of a freak, because she was small even though well made. We talk learnedly from time to time of the certainty of the good big one beating the good little one, but we saw Love in Idleness reverse the dictum. She was as game as a mongoose and would not be beaten if she could help it. Certainly the courage of this little lop-eared filly was in reverse ratio to her size. On

the Downs she had a pretty little trick of dislodging the boy on her back. She would quietly put him off before he knew anything about it, and then stand quietly as a rule to let him vault back into the saddle while she listened to the jeering comments of the other lads. I knew of another brilliant filly that would occasionally do the same thing on the Beckhampton gallops. That was Tiffin, who had an unbeaten career, and then, alas, died after foaling her first offspring, Merenda, who brought her more posthumous honour by winning at Ascot as a two-year-old.

All men privileged and fortunate enough to lead in classic winners at Epsom must reveal their surging joy. The Aga Khan becomes the incarnation of sheer joyousness. Lord Astor is self-conscious but happy. Lord Derby positively beams. Mr. Jack Joel perspires and goes pale; the late Mr. Sol Joel had no experience of the kind vouchsafed him at Epsom, desperately hard though he tried, but elsewhere, with the occasion big, his pleasure took the form of a dripping perspiration however cool the occasion. Mr. John Dewar adapted himself to the rôle as if to the manner born, though if Fate had not intervened Cameronian would have been led in by the man who bred him, Lord Dewar, who for many years had been aiming at that goal and then was not permitted to reach it.

Frank Curzon was actually a dying man when he led in his Derby winner, Call Boy, but over the ghastly pallor of his face there fled a faint smile as he stumbled into the unsaddling ring, clutching the white leading rein, and murmuring "Thank You's" to his friends who spoke their congratulations. Lord Glanely, portly and swelling with pride, could force a passage through the crowd without any special assistance. Grand Parade in 1919, and Rose of England, years later on an Oaks afternoon, have given him practice. He is ever seeking for more, though he is action-perfect in the part. Yet of all those I have mentioned I doubt whether any lucky man showed deeper satisfaction than the late Lord Manton when he was given Love in Idleness's leading rein to escort her to the place of honour.

He loved the filly. When on a visit to Manton he would stand in her box and simply gaze in admiration and affection. He was not spared to enjoy the astonishing successes of those



other yearlings that Alec Taylor in his wisdom had purchased for him. The fillies were leased to Mr. Somerville Tattersall, ever a friend of the Manton stable, and destined, with his partner, Mr. Gerald Deane (the able manager of Lord Astor's racing interests), to become its proprietor. Those fillies gained fame on the racecourse. Some gained more on passing to stud life. Tebrabazzia became the dam of the St. Leger winner Singapore. Lady Juror enriched Mr. Dewar's stud. Lord Manton's association with the stable was all too brief. The story of it is a blend of romance and something much akin to pathos.

## CHAPTER V

BECKHAMPTON: FOUR DERBY WINNERS IN ELEVEN YEARS:  
THE BEST OF ALL RACED IN THE WAR YEAR OF 1916

Fred Darling as an unusual personality—A blend of two schools—A recollection of Mr. Leopold de Rothschild—Beckhampton trainer and his methods—Hurry On the best horse ever at Beckhampton—Massive, boisterous, arrogant, and brilliant—His trial—Captain Cuttle his son—Affection for his trainer—His Derby triumph in 1922.

THE Beckhampton trainer, Fred Darling, may read this without being thrilled. He is a great trainer, but a poor courtier. I mean that in the years that have passed since the War he has kept on reminding us that he is at the top of his profession, but never has he courted the compliments of commentators in print. Rather, indeed, has he openly resented them if they have not left him cold.

Inevitably I compare him with his contemporaries. Some may be surfeited with praise of their achievements, others may lap it up and still remain unsatisfied. But always I have found such people to be over-sensitive to the slightest criticism. They accept the compliments as a matter of course; they resent even reasonable criticism as personal affronts; and, if they do not sulk, they brood and remember until jam once more takes the place of much diluted vinegar. Now there can be no moral nourishment, no aid to better understanding, in comment and criticism which are for ever sugar-coated. And if this applies to all things within my purview how very much must it do so to the achievements of men and the performances of horses on the Turf? One may write with charm and yet without colour. But if one does not command respect of thought and criticism then one is barren and sterile of achievement.

It is easy to misjudge, so hard to write the words that ought to be written. There is the temptation to drift with a strong running tide, knowing all the time that one's duty is to steer a

straight course, difficult though it may be to hold at times. To sustain it even the least sensitive must feel the strain. I have said that it is easy to misjudge. It is not always easy to admit having done so, but the critic loses no respect who may have the courage to make the admission. Rather should he gain by it.

Very soon after the late Lord Burnham had appointed me the racing correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* I must have stated in print that a certain horse owned by the late Mr. Leopold de Rothschild had fallen towards the finish of a race at Epsom. It was just a recital in the day's news. Perhaps I implied that I did not notice that any other horse, or the tactics of any rider, were to blame. As a matter of fact a jockey was held to blame and suspended for the remainder of the meeting. Soon afterwards Mr. Leopold, to whom I had never addressed a word in my life and who I had no reason to suppose even knew me by sight, came to me and poured out a torrent of wrathful rebukes and bitter resentment that I should not have made it clear that his horse had not been brought down through its own fault but through the fault of some other. He was clearly in a temper.

It seemed such a small thing in any case to have been the cause of the wrath of this member of the Jockey Club. I might seriously have questioned the pertinence of the attack and referred him to Lord Burnham with whom I had no doubt he was on the most friendly terms at all times. For the moment, though, I could not appreciate the explosion on the part of a member of the Jockey Club, the owner of an important string of racehorses, and one who I knew for years had received from the racing Press of those days nothing but flattery and compliments. He was pale and furious.

Reflecting on that encounter I felt disturbed to think I had so offended such an important personage in racing and then annoyed he should have shown some unfairness to one who was merely doing his job to the best of his ability and conscience. Mr. Leopold de Rothschild died soon afterwards, so that no opportunity occurred for peace-making. Yet I realise that he was at heart kindly and a warm-hearted friend, while years later, in his most admirable book dealing with men and horses he had known, the Hon. George Lambton wrote of Mr. Leopold as one "Excitable and emotional, with a quick

temper. I have known him flare up and attack people sometimes without reasons, but so generous and open-hearted was he in making amends that one liked him better after one of those breezes."

I have no doubt that had he lived respect for each other would have been born in us.

Fred Darling, I have said, could never bring himself to be a courtier of the Press. Really there was never the slightest need for him to do so, especially after he had re-established himself at Beckhampton after serving in the war. Ever since his name has never been off the "bill" and his procession of high-class horses seldom off the front of the stage. So that the faithful chronicler of events could never leave his name out of the news. Hurry On in the war, Captain Cuttle, Manna, Coronach, Cameronian, Tiffin, Myrobella—they have, indeed, enriched recent racing history.

I have the greatest admiration for him as a trainer. It is an admiration that has grown just as he himself has slightly mellowed as he has got older, though he remains an unusual individual, blending some of the taciturnity and instinctive secrecy of old generations of trainers, especially those who could not ignore the betting aspects of racing, with the more intelligent outlook of the practitioners of to-day. No one in other respects has advanced more with the times than Fred Darling, which is proof of itself of his intelligence and deep thinking.

It is a common remark on the racecourse that about the trained horse from Beckhampton there is a distinction missing from so many others. It tells that fitness has been gained while all the time condition has been built up. So often training is interpreted as gaining clear windedness at the expense of loss of muscular tissue. I cannot tell you the Beckhampton secrets because I do not know them. Perhaps there are none. The judicious employment of hygiene in stables, the right temperatures to seek, the right and the wrong way of feeding, and the study of the individual rather than of the multitude may be the things that matter. And then the work on the Downs. He never overdoes that. He must excel in that, too, if the top of the tree is to be reached.

There is the factor of the personal touch in everything that appertains to the racing stable. It means tremendous hard

work. Fred Darling typifies all that. I have been his guest at Beckhampton with some frequency and have had him under close observation. In his comfortable home, now so changed from the days when the walls enclosed the residence of his father, Sam, who from Beckhampton sent out two exceptional horses in Galtee More and Ard Patrick to win Derbys, he is the perfect host. In stables and on the Downs he is the perfect trainer with no room in his thoughts for you. He was brought up by his father in what would be considered a hard school to-day. The fact is reflected in the standard of discipline he expects and maintains. On the Downs he is wholly concentrating on the horses and their work. He is absolutely absorbed, noting a thousand and one details and with a trained eye for the way this or that horse is working, making allowance for its peculiarities whether it be a keen goer naturally or something of a sluggard, the one often a flatterer, the other something of a deceiver but often the better.

It is the same on the racecourse. Absorption and concentration, with no time and thought for anything but his business. He must unbend and talk every now and then to those who have a right to his confidence. Yet I sometimes think even then he resents having to do so. He can be blunt to the point of being rude in repelling the unwanted conversationalist. Popularity never bothers him, and anyone less desirous of wanting it and the embarrassments it sometimes inflicts in racing I never knew. He just goes his own way, looking neither to right or left, a little ruthless maybe, working hard and thinking desperately to get the best horse by breeding or purchase and then to get the best out of it. His brother trainers may not love him. I am sure of that. There is much jealousy on the Turf. But what does that matter? They are simply compelled to admire and respect him. He is the successful man, a leader to be followed at his job.

"The best horse I have ever seen, the best I am ever likely to see," was once how he summed up Hurry On to me. Now that is superlative praise and wants looking into for justification before we can accept the estimate. It comes from one who had never trained a Derby winner before the coming of Hurry On as a racehorse in 1916 and his super-champion did not even win the War Derby of his year. There was a very good reason why he did not: he was not entered for the race

won by the filly Fifinella. Fred Darling has had four Derby winners in the post-war years. He still gives pride of place to Hurray On.

I remember him as an uncommonly big and powerful chestnut horse. He stood just on seventeen hands, which I need hardly say is an out-size in racehorses, especially when with size there is the power implied by exceptional bone and great muscular development. If he had been born in normal times to be entered for the classic races in the conventional way he might have made brilliant history. As it was he only ran as a three-year-old, never to be beaten, and to include in his successes the September Stakes which was the substituted race at Newmarket for the St. Leger. It could not take place in the war year of 1916.

We know that he has been a great stud success for many years and that among his progeny are three Derby winners in Captain Cuttle, Coronach, and Call Boy, and two Oaks winners. What a very remarkable bargain he was, therefore, as a yearling for only 500 guineas. This was the price paid for him at auction by Fred Darling. The son of Marcovil and Toute Suite was bred by the late Mr. W. Murland, who for so many years took a lively interest in National Hunt racing. The trainer passed him on to Lord Woolavington. I did not see him as a yearling, but the buyer whose fancy he took has described him to me as a "great big ungainly-looking fellow that was much overgrown and immature, whose only hope was time."

He was indulged with what he wanted, which is the way of the trainer with patience and imagination. The time came when he really did begin to gain in strength. In the Spring as a three-year-old he told them at Beckhampton that he was at last feeling his strength. He showed it by becoming boisterous and headstrong. He was brimming over with high courage. The thing was to avoid taking too many liberties with it. It was difficult to give him slow work even after he had been given a lot of exercise. The horse never seemed sure of what his trainer was going to do with him when he chose to get on his back. The trainer had to be guided from one day to another how to work him.

As a matter of fact Fred Darling got on with him much better than anyone else. Joe Childs managed him all right

except when the horse hopped off with him one morning at Newmarket. Joe did not at all relish that. The next morning the trainer got on his back, and it was the only occasion when the horse took charge of him and went whither he willed before being pulled up. Nothing escaped his notice. If a leaf eddied in the road, if a lark flew up out of the grass on the Downs, it was sufficient to start him kicking and making himself something of a nuisance. If a stranger went into his box he would fly back. For a long time he resented even his trainer making his evening visit. Once a visitor walked into the box before he could be warned and the big horse nearly got him.

For a horse of his size he was as quick on his legs as a pony. The arrogant fellow seemed to understand how superior he was to his fellows in the stable. The consciousness made him difficult to control. I have Fred Darling's word for it that Hurry On never knew what it was to be extended either at Beckhampton or in public. Before he went to Lingfield for his first race he had once been practised at the starting gate, and never had he been galloped with another horse "upsides," which means in close company. In that Lingfield Park race he showed the greenness of a raw novice. He dwelt at the start while the practised performers went away, but, once on his legs, he just strolled up to them and past them to win easily.

Before being sent to Newmarket for the September Stakes there was this trial on September 8th, 1916, at Beckhampton:

Hurry On, 3 yrs.	—	—	9 st. 12 lb.	—	—	1
Brownii, 4 yrs.	—	—	6 st. 12 lb.	—	—	2
Ferox, 3 yrs.	—	—	7 st. 12 lb.	—	—	3
Gay Lally, 4 yrs.	—	—	8 st. 4 lb.	—	—	4

Hurry On, by arrangement, gave the others six or eight lengths start on a severe mile and three-quarter gallop. When they had covered a mile and a quarter he joined them, passed them one after the other, to win the trial running away. I may mention that Brownii had only just been beaten a neck for the Newbury Cup. It was the only time he was ever asked a question, but instead of being a trial it turned out to be just an ordinary exercise gallop for him after all. It could be said of him that he was one of the few extraordinary horses that could



LORD WOOLAVINGTON'S HURRY ON, A MASSIVE HORSE

Unbeaten in 1916, and considered by Fred Darling to be the best horse he has ever trained.



*Photos by Frank Griggs, Newmarket*

LORD WOOLAVINGTON'S CAPTAIN CUTTLE, WINNER OF THE DERBY, 1922

This picture was taken soon after he had gone to the stud. Sire of the King's One Thousand Guineas winner, Scuttle.





go on galloping after finishing bolting. As Fred Darling once said: "He had the physique of a horse and a half."

At Newbury he had counted the One Thousand Guineas winner, Canyon, among his victims. He polished her off while merely cantering. Clarissimus, the winner of the Two Thousand Guineas that year, was one of those slaughtered by him for the September Stakes. I frequently saw Hurry On during his stud life at Lavington Park. Having assumed the maturity of the stallion he became positively massive. He had reached twenty years of age the last time I set eyes on him. A grand old man that did his duty nobly both on and off the Turf and so writ his name in history in indelible letters!

. . . . .

His son, Captain Cuttle, was the first Derby winner to win in the colours of that most lavish supporter of racing and breeding, Lord Woolavington. One may feel grateful to Captain Cuttle for that alone. Between him and his trainer there was genuine affection of the sort that one has for the horse that simply makes you love him, perhaps because of special intelligence. It may be born of gratitude for good deeds done and for the pleasure he has given you.

If the Beckhampton trainer admired Hurry On for what I might call his overwhelmingness he fell in love with Captain Cuttle because the horse showed a distinct liking for him. He would practically follow him anywhere. There are not many high-class horses that you can lead off the gallops and be sure they are not going to be up to any monkey tricks, but the trainer himself would lead Captain Cuttle and the horse would amiably follow, just content to hold on to his coat sleeve with his teeth. As he was being boxed to go to Epsom for the Derby he found himself loose in one of the yards, a palpitating moment for the trainer. The horse proceeded to trot from one yard to the other and was making for the high road, which, incidentally, is the main Bath Road in that part of Wiltshire. His trainer shouted to him. Instantly the Derby winner halted, hesitated for a moment, and came trotting back to be restored into safe custody.

Captain Cuttle used to walk at the back of the string, taking no notice of anything. A traction engine meant nothing at all to him. The only thing that caused him to prick his ears and

take notice was a cart-horse. That seemed to amuse him. Curious that in these things there should have been such a vast difference between him and his father. That is not to say he was without high courage. It was just dormant and kept under control until wanted. He knew the moment a strange lad got on his back. He would show it by some jumping and kicking, but on the whole, though full of character, he was a most placid individual. If he had not been a high-class race-horse he would have made an ideal trainer's hack, for he would stand perfectly still and watch the whole string of horses canter or gallop by. Yet he knew when his turn had come to work. He would never set off until he had given one or two fly jumps and kicks. He would pull hard, though not in the same street in that respect as his father. If you would like to know what he was like in appearance let me say that he was a chestnut with a white face, white forelegs, and a white near hind sock. He was big and robust, and might even have been gross-looking until he fined down with training.

I well remember seeing him make his only appearance as a two-year-old. It was at the Doncaster September meeting. He had caught my eye in the paddock as a big colt of possibilities though I could see he was nothing like ready. Also I saw in him a son of Hurry On. In the race he showed his inexperience, but, nevertheless, finished second to one named Collaborator, who could go at that time.

I do not propose to make this story a dry recital of his racing career. There are certain facts calling for notice. For instance, he won his first race as a three-year-old. A potential Derby winner could not well do anything else than dispose of others who, like himself, were taking part in an event for horses that had not won up to the time of entry. On the 20th of May, 1922, with the Derby looming near, he was given a good rough gallop over a mile and a half when the weights were: Captain Cuttle, 3 yrs, 8 st. 12 lb.; Willonya, 4 yrs., 7 st. 6 lb.; Westward Ho, 4 yrs., 9 st. 1 lb. "The Captain" did all that he was expected to do. Willonya, I may mention, was a useful handicapper. Westward Ho had finished third for the St. Leger won by Polemarch. He is the horse that as a yearling cost Lord Glanely 11,500 guineas, the first high-priced yearling to beat the record of 10,000 guineas paid for Sceptre in 1899.

Four days later there was another gallop over a mile and a

half, and this time Victor Smyth, who it was then assumed was going to ride the colt in the Derby, came down to make better acquaintance with him. This was the gallop:

Willonya	—	—	—	7 st. 5 lb.	—	—	1
Fred Power	—	—	—	8 st. 9 lb.	—	—	2
Captain Cuttle	—	—	—	9 st. 1 lb.	—	—	3

The Derby colt was beaten by about four lengths from Willonya.

Now that was not too good, especially with the race so close. Whether Fred Darling came to the conclusion that Captain Cuttle and Smyth did not get on well I do not know, but close to the race there was an important move made to secure Steve Donoghue. Lord Woolavington badly wanted him. Fred Darling, who had a full appreciation of Steve's exceptional ability over the Derby course at Epsom—he had won the Derby of the previous year on Humorist and was at the zenith of his form—badly wanted him. Mr. James White, who was understood to have a claim on him, had Norseman in the race. It was for him to be placated and to release him. Certain wires were pulled and the thing was settled over the week-end.

On the Monday morning of Derby week Donoghue took an aeroplane and landed on the Downs at Beckhampton. He had never been on the horse before. Fred Darling has told me that the horse never went better in his life than he did that morning for Donoghue. As is well known he triumphed all right two days later, though, at the last moment, there was an awful scare when it was found that just as he was about to parade and take part in the canter to the post one of his plates had been twisted. A farrier had to be found in the few minutes available, the plate removed, straightened, and then restored. I can see the big chestnut cantering late to the post and moving none too well. But by the time the starting-post had been reached Donoghue had got him well warmed up. Some trouble in his knees, which even then might have been asserting itself, was overcome. He was perfectly placed rounding Tattenham Corner. Soon afterwards Donoghue had him headed for home and he tore along the straight to rank as one of the very easy winners of the Blue Riband.

I can imagine many people dropping him for the Derby after his failure for the Two Thousand Guineas. I must say

that at the time he rather dismayed me. Looking back now I should say he was nothing like at his best. For six days he was very bad with stomach trouble after his win at the Craven meeting. He never looked back between the first of the classic races and the Derby. I should say the race for the Derby rather shook him up, because although he won the St. James's Palace Stakes at Ascot two weeks later he had been giving some anxiety. As a matter of fact he did not run again that season, which explains why he had to miss Goodwood and Doncaster. There may have been hopes of training him for the Ascot Gold Cup after he had won a small race at Kempton Park as a four-year-old, but then the old leg trouble really became serious, and he went to join his parents at the Lavington Park Stud, until, a few years later, Lord Woolavington let the Italians have him for a sum which I always understood to be £50,000.

## CHAPTER VI

### BECKHAMPTON: MANNA—CORONACH—CAMERONIAN

How Manna came to be bought—A word-picture of the 1925 Derby winner—Clever, intelligent, and quick to learn—Scaring incidents in his training—What Coronach knew—Secret of his successes—A smashing good horse—Cameronian in 1931—Details of his Derby trial—Foul doping suspected in the St. Leger.

AND now I come to the second of the post-war Derby winners—Manna in 1925. One day in 1923, very close to the Doncaster yearling sales in September, Fred Darling received a cable from Shanghai. It read something like this: "Please buy me the best yearling colt at Doncaster." The sender was Mr. Harry E. Morriss, a successful money broker in China. Now he was not asking for a small thing and he must have known that he would have to pay the big thing. One might go to Doncaster and, after wading conscientiously through the catalogue and seeing as many of the best bred colts as possible, buy what one considered to be the best. And again it certainly might not. If it were otherwise buying would be such a straightforward business. If several of the best judges were agreed that a certain colt stood out on breeding, looks, and promise and could be relied on to be the best of the several hundred yearlings sold them, of course victory would go to the richest bidder. We should lose the fascinating attractions of the lottery there is about yearling buying. For I am sure it is a tremendous gamble. Ask Miss Dorothy Paget among prominent buyers of to-day. I think of the great aggregate expended on yearlings at auction by Lord Woolavington and the late Lord Dewar. Yet the latter bred the Derby winner of 1931 which was to triumph in the name of his heir, Mr. J. A. Dewar; while Lord Woolavington bred both his Derby winners, Captain Cuttle and Coronach, though, let me add, they were sired by the grand horse Hurry On for which his trainer had paid only five hundred guineas as a yearling in the auction

ring. I am quite sure the late Major Eustace Loder could not have supposed he was getting the best yearling at Doncaster in 1904 when he gave only three hundred guineas for Spearmint, surely one of the best Derby winners of this century.

However, we may be sure that Fred Darling, with that cable in his pocket, did believe he had bought the best colt in the sales when he gave 6300 guineas for the colt by Phalaris from Waffles to which Mr. Morriss gave the name of Manna. And, of course, he had. For after a highly satisfactory two-year-old career, during which he was certainly not over-raced, Manna won the Two Thousand Guineas and Derby and then hopelessly broke down in the St. Leger won by Solario. The Beckhampton trainer has no doubt at all that he must have won had he kept sound. He had reasons for knowing Manna had never been anything like as good as he was up to going to post for the race. Fred Darling will bet when he thinks the right moment has come. I feel certain that he had two of the biggest bets of his life on Manna for the St. Leger and Cameronian for the St. Leger six years later. Some may consider that the best yearling sold at Doncaster in 1923 was Solario, for whom the late Sir John Rutherford paid 3500 guineas. It is not my belief. Manna beat him for the Derby and, of course, I pay no attention to Solario having a broken-down Manna behind him for the St. Leger. If there was ever any question between them it could not be settled, because Manna never ran again. It was really as a four-year-old that Solario gained his reputation, or rather consolidated his St. Leger honours, when he won the Coronation Cup at Epsom and the Ascot Gold Cup.

I think it would be quite right to describe Manna as being rather on the small side. But he was perfectly balanced and very much of the St. Simon type, which means he had exceptional quality and vivacity. That he should belong to the type is not surprising. There are several crosses of St. Simon in his pedigree. One very special distinction belongs to him. He is the only horse that has succeeded in kicking his trainer. This he did at Kempton Park, and ever afterwards he never ceased to try and repeat his success, much to his (the horse's) amusement. It made no matter where he was. He enjoyed scaring anyone, whether in his box, on the Downs, or on a racecourse. Yet he had no vice. It is odd that some of his progeny have precisely the same trick. He was extraordinarily clever and

showed his intelligence by the quick way he learned. For instance, he learned to stay.

Right from the beginning of his stay at Beckhampton he had tremendous speed and beautiful action. After he had won the Two Thousand Guineas the thing was to get him to stay the mile and a half of the Derby. It was then that he definitely learned to reserve his speed as the distance of his work was increased. I mean that he learned to come from behind at the increasing distances. A horse must have brains to fall into that. Coronach, for instance, never allowed himself to learn in that way. It is merely wasted effort trying to restrain such a horse. He would take far more out of himself than would be required for the extra distance.

Manna certainly had his moments, great and spectacular. One day, as a yearling, he got loose in a paddock. He threw off the man on his back, incidentally sending him into hospital, and then proceeded to jump a hedge quite five feet high. He landed in the next field, turned left-handed, and jumped from the top of a high bank to land on the main London-Bath tarmac road. He chose a moment to do this when his trainer's back was turned. Fred Darling was at Newmarket and came back to find the 6300-guinea colt with a nasty wound below and outside the elbow.

This prospective winner of the Derby did things at such speed. One day he threw his boy off and managed somehow to kick him in mid-air. I suppose it would be while the boy was making a sort of parachute descent. That boy also had a few days in hospital. He probably disagreed with the trainers' view that Manna had no vice. It happened that Mrs. Morriss was visiting Beckhampton at the time, and the trainer had just made the remark to her: "You will see the best mover you have ever seen in your life," when the colt moved his boy in the way I have described. It was as if he had been listening-in to the conversation.

The late Winter and Spring of 1925 were very wet and the gallops at Beckhampton were heavy. Fred Darling has told me he dare not extend Manna as thoroughly as he would have wished. Therefore, he thought the colt was backward as the day of the Two Thousand Guineas arrived, though, shortly before going to Newmarket, he had much surprised everyone by the form he showed when galloped with Golden Chalice



over a mile. Golden Chalice was a useful winner and very fit at the time. Being rather uncertain as to his condition, the trainer told Steve Donoghue not to pull the colt out of his stride, but to let him come along and then perhaps his great speed would carry the others off their legs. Really the orders were to let him run his own race.

Manna made the whole of the running and won the Two Thousand Guineas by two lengths. The starting price was 100 to 8, which is not the price of a fancied Beckhampton horse. The result did very much more than bring in only the stake. It told that now he must have a very fine chance of winning the Derby. There was so much more to work on and the trainer was dealing with a colt that kept responding and helping him to the objective. There has never been a horse at Beckhampton to settle down and train better. Every gallop he did he went one better. One day he gave 10 lb. and a four lengths' beating to Warden of the Marches, who was a smart horse, and later in the year was third to Solario for the St. Leger. Manna became a good thing now for the Derby. He was the easiest winner I had ever seen of the Derby up to that time. Only Hyperion, eight years later, appeared more to pulverise his opponents, though the judge declared that Manna won by eight lengths and Hyperion by only four. I rather fancy the same judge did not act on the two occasions.

It will interest many readers if I give details of two rough gallops or trials in which Manna participated, two prior to the Derby and the other with the St. Leger in view. On April 22nd, 1925, there was this gallop:

Manna	—	—	—	8 st. 7 lb.	—	Donoghue	1
Warden of the Marches				8 st. 7 lb.	—	Wells	2
Brig o' Doon, 4 yrs.	—			8 st. 8 lb.	—	Lammin	3
Siope, 3 yrs.		—	—	7 st. 2 lb.	—	Rogers	4

Won by a length, hard held.

It was not a sensational trial. The Beckhampton trainer does not believe in asking too much of his horses in private. There is always the racecourse available for that.

On May 21st Donoghue was on his back again at Beckhampton. The colt carried 8 st. 4 lb. when he polished off two old horses—Florid, who was receiving 2 st., and Diapason,

a four-year-old that later in the year won the Goodwood Stakes under 8 st. 10 lb.

On September 2nd there was this further trial:

Manna, 3 yrs.	—	—	8 st. 9 lb.	—	Donoghue	1
Warden of the Marches, 3 yrs.	—	—	8 st. 4 lb.	—	Wells	2
Florid, 5 yrs.	—	—	6 st. 7 lb.	—	Nolan	3
Vitmar, 4 yrs.	—	—	7 st. 8 lb.			

Won easily by half a length.

Now as Warden of the Marches could finish third to Solario for the St. Leger we get some idea of where Manna should have been. Yet before the race started, while actually cantering to the post, he cracked a bone in his knee.

Coronach always knew he could go fast. He would never let himself forget, or his trainer and those who had to ride him. There was no better looking horse. He stood full sixteen hands and was full of liberty, with a passion for going in front and a hatred of being restrained. As a backward two-year-old he won first time out. But he was most temperamental, very resolute and excitable. He was backward when as a three-year-old he began by winning the Column Produce Stakes. He was still backward when he went to post favourite for the Two Thousand Guineas. Condition and an indifferent start beat him. Colorado won quite easily for Lord Derby.

Between that race and the Derby the trainer made the discovery that it was most important the horse should not be restrained in his work. It was then he realised what a smashing good horse he was. In nine cases out of ten the high-class horse will come from behind and win. Coronach represented the tenth case. Allowed to sling along in front, maintaining perfect rhythm and splendid, determined action, he would give no quarter to his pursuers. Everything went marvellously once the discovery had been made, and on the morning of the Derby Fred Darling had never been so sanguine in his life of winning a race. This was an instance when he did back his belief to some purpose.

Coronach scored a spectacular triumph. He was away in the lead soon after the start and he won cantering by five lengths. Joe Childs was on his back. He favours waiting tactics whenever he can. This was a case when he could not.

Coronach gave him no choice and, moreover, the trainer had given him very specific orders which the experienced jockey found it easy to carry out. It was the same in the St. Leger. Coronach went off in almost a frightening way, and I have heard Childs say that he would never have been able to recover control but for a policeman stepping out from the rails after going a certain distance and distracting the horse's attention. Fortunately he did not begin to fight with him then. He rode him perfectly, though I do not think the handsome chestnut was finishing with much in hand as he went past the winning post.

Steve Donoghue, on Embargo, would probably have beaten Coronach for the Coronation Cup the next year, but he employed waiting tactics. He did not know then the weakness of Lord Woolavington's horse. If Embargo had been rushed into the lead or had disputed it with Coronach from the outset, it is by no means certain that he would have won. At seven to two on, he gave his backers a great fright as it was. I fancy Mr. Lambton discovered a way of getting Coronach beaten. For how else can be explained the deliberate tactics of Lord Derby's jockey when, on Colorado, in the race for the Princess of Wales's Stakes at Newmarket he set Colorado alight and drew up to Coronach with fully half a mile to go? The duel was short. Coronach could not have it his own way and he surrendered. It was the same for the Eclipse Stakes. The same Colorado tactics and the same result. Coronach was a champion until the secret of his weakness passed out of the keeping of his trainer.

Cameronian is one of the Derby winners of my time for which I shall ever have a special admiration. In some ways he was very like Manna, except that he was more even tempered. For, like Manna, he had brilliant speed and was quick to learn. In looks he was a good, hard bay, compact and most bloodlike. In his slow paces on the Downs he carried his head on one side. Now that usually indicates a bad mouth. With him, however, it was simply a habit. When extended he was so handy that his rider could put him anywhere, and he must have been easy to ride in a race. Like Manna, too, he was backward when the Two Thousand Guineas came along, although he had had a race at the Craven meeting a fortnight before. In a rough gallop with Lord Ellesmere's Lemnarchus

the latter had shown such fine speed as to deceive Fox, the stable jockey, and to some extent the stable. Fox must have been deceived or he would not have chosen to ride Lemnarchus rather than Cameronian in the classic race. Obviously he thought Lord Ellesmere's colt would get the mile and at the time was superior to the other.

I remember seeing them striding along in company on the morning before the race at Newmarket. I knew which Fox had elected to ride, and yet I must have seen something, both when the two were in action and later when they were walking round after pulling up, that made me back Cameronian for the Derby that day while having a trifle on him for the Two Thousand Guineas. Naturally, it was important to back him for the Derby before the Two Thousand Guineas if you believed he would win both races. If he won on the next day he would come to a short price for the Derby. If he lost—well, you had to lose with him, though I should not have despaired. I have seen so many high-class horses too backward to win the Two Thousand Guineas and yet able to win the Derby. Likewise, many win the Two Thousand Guineas that could not possibly stay the mile and a half of the Derby course. We know that Lemnarchus proved unable to get more than six furlongs. Cameronian had just as good speed as that horse but, of vital importance, he was a stayer, too.

On May 30th, 1931, there was this trial at Beckhampton:

Cameronian, 3 yrs.	—	8 st. 9 lb.	—	Sherry	1
Parenthesis, 4 yrs.	—	9 st. 3 lb.	—	Beynon	2
Brother-in-Law, 4 yrs.	—	7 st. 12 lb.	—	Wesley	3
Rallye II, 5 yrs.	—	7 st. 1 lb.	—	Morton	4
Four Course, 3 yrs.	—	8 st. 3 lb.	—	Fox	5

One mile and a half. Won easily.

Now Parenthesis had been second for the St. Leger the previous year. And the day after Cameronian's Derby triumph he won the Coronation Cup. Four Course, we know, had won the One Thousand Guineas, though luckily, from Lady Marjorie by a head. The other two were decent winners, especially Brother-in-Law, who won the June Rose Handicap at Sandown Park over a mile and five furlongs. Cameronian, after having anything but a clear run through the race, won the

Derby comfortably from Orpen, Sandwich, Goyescas and others. It was in my opinion one of the best-class fields for many years for the Derby.

The rest of Cameronian's history as a three-year-old is tragic, if we except his delightful win of the St. James's Palace Stakes at Ascot. I am thinking of the St. Leger and the sight of him, as a 6 to 5 on favourite, coming in last of all in a field of ten, dead beat, and, indeed, a pathetic sight. What on earth had happened? This could not be the horse that had won at Epsom and Ascot and had then been judiciously rested before entering on a graduated preparation for the last of the season's classic races. Here was a dead horse; not a horse that is sent out from Beckhampton perfectly trained and having satisfied his exacting trainer that he is better than ever.

I cannot say that he was "got at." It is so easy to use those words, impossible to prove them. You will say then: "Why make the statement if you can't prove your words?" The answer is that in this darker side of racing the light is so rarely forthcoming and, yet, having eliminated all possibilities and explored every avenue, one is left with no alternative explanation. Fox found that his horse was crazy to begin with—so utterly unlike his real self. His madness could not be checked for so long as it lasted, though he took the horse to the outside, away from the rest, in the hope that he would settle down. His way of settling down was to "blow up" so that he could not go on. The madness had passed off leaving him a wreck of his true self.

That same evening he had a temperature of 103, which shows he was very much wrong. For over a year afterwards he ran a temperature which never varied from 100.2. Some people will say that is near enough to normal to make no matter, the normal being between 99 and 100. Yet I suggest Fred Darling or any first-class trainer would not be satisfied with a horse whose temperature was 100.2. There must have been some sinister reason to cause the horse's long illness. We know that doping was known to be going on about this time and was practically proved to the satisfaction of Stewards of the Jockey Club. It is easily possible that Cameronian was a victim, notwithstanding all the precautions taken to guard him.

He ran four times as a four-year-old, twice when he was not right and when, perhaps, he should not have run, and then in

the Autumn. A fortnight before the race for the Jockey Club Stakes, at the end of September, his temperature for the first time for over a year returned to normal. Instantly he began to "do," but the mile and three-quarter race was too near to permit of his being right back to form. Nevertheless, he ran a fine race to be beaten only a neck and a length by the St. Leger winner, Firdaussi (received 12 lb.), and Gainslaw (received 29 lb.). A fortnight later, stimulated by that race after a long absence from a racecourse and the further training, he won the Champion Stakes of a mile and a quarter, giving Dastur, second for the classic races, the weight-for-age of 7 lb. and a four lengths' beating. That was a most impressive win to end a racing career. I really believe that if the mile and a quarter race had come first then Cameronian would have won the two. He would have been so much better equipped to win over a mile and three-quarters a fortnight later. I write as the first of his foals are arriving. They will, I feel, do a genuine and high-class horse much honour.

## CHAPTER VII

### CELEBRITIES AT WHATCOMBE

Impressions of Mr. R. C. Dawson—Scholarly and academic rather than of the racecourse—Years with the Aga Khan—Then the parting—Fifinella in 1916—New Derby and New Oaks won—Brilliant but peevish and spiteful—A fortune found in Blandford—Salmon Trout's strange St. Leger sequel—Mumtaz Mahal—Woolley—Hallaton—Blenheim—Trigo.

LOOKING around for interesting horses in our time one would certainly have to pause at Whatcombe, a remote spot in Berkshire, which, though distant from the hurly-burly of daily life, is still a very vital part of the chain of training centres in that part of England. For years it has been the home of Richard C. Dawson and the great many horses that have been in his charge ever since, in 1898, he came over from Ireland and with little ado won the Grand National with a horse of his own, Drogheda. If he was comparatively unknown then it can be said that he has lived to make his name quite world-famous as a trainer.

He is one of that band of Irishmen who, as exponents of the training art, and, perhaps, I should add, nurtured in the craft of dealing, found England immensely more profitable than the land of their birth. We have always had Irish trainers with us, at any rate during the last thirty or forty years. They may not be strong numerically but they have proved formidable in other ways. It has been the fashion to accept them as having exceptional knowledge of thoroughbreds, and not only in the training of them but in the intelligent management of them. One need not wonder why. They come from a land in which have been bred some of the great ones in the history of racing. They have found in England their instinct to train well fortified by those qualities of character so typical of Hibernian horse sense. Five of our leading trainers to-day, and, indeed, for some years past, are the head of Whatcombe, of whom and his horses I am proposing to write now, Mr. H. S. Persse of Stockbridge, Mr. Frank

Hartigan of Weyhill, Captain Cecil Boyd Rochfort of Newmarket, and Mr. Martin Hartigan of Ogbourne.

Dick Dawson was the pioneer of these migrants. He certainly has an individuality all his own. It is indicated by his appearance. Any individual less suggestive of the horsey world could not be conceived; indeed you would not at first glance take him for an Irishman. You would have your doubts settled the moment he spoke. Rather would he give the impression of being a member of one of the learned professions, for there is a scholarly and academic look about his appearance. He has never fallen for the cult of the comfortable horn-rimmed spectacles though he must wear glasses. He is faithful to the old fashioned pince-nez, which, adjusted as far up the nose as possible, seem to sit in repose with marked firmness of purpose. I have seen him much agitated, deeply annoyed, very hurt, amused (though his sense of humour is not keenly developed) and tragically indignant at different times. But always the pince-nez have never been in any danger of being divorced from their own little bit of nasal territory.

I have never seen him, not even, I think, at his home, when I have had the privilege of accompanying him on to his Downs superintending the working of his horses, in such dress as is supposed to be conventional for one figuring as a trainer. But then he is anything but conventional in lots of ways. His face has not the red bronze of the out-of-door man who lives in the country. He was unconventional in marrying a very charming lady late in life, but he is, nevertheless, the father of a considerable flock.

If you watch carefully you will not see him do the actual saddling of his horses on the racecourse. Mr. Lambton, the brother of a Peer, who in his day was a very notable Turf administrator, will do so. So also will the King's trainer, Willie Jarvis, and Frank Butters, who is training with such success for the Aga Khan, and, indeed, I cannot name any other who is satisfied not to have the last word, so to say, in seeing that saddle girths are as they should be, that the saddle is not pinching, and that the bridle is likely to stay in its proper place.

I once had the courage to ask my trainer friend about this. "Well," he explained, "why should I? Surely I can trust an efficient servant to saddle a horse. He can do a thing like that



just as well as I can, perhaps better." There was no more to be said after that.

When I think of Dick Dawson and Whatcombe there pass in procession in my mind two Derby winners in Trigo and Blenheim, an Oaks winner in Brownhylda, a St. Leger winner in Salmon Trout, Fifinella, who in the same week at Newmarket during the war won both the New Derby and the New Oaks, of Rustom Pasha, winner of the Eclipse Stakes, and then of the lesser fry of handicap heroes and heroines, not least among them being Silver Tag, a Cambridgeshire winner. He was the Aga Khan's first trainer in this country to whom was sent to be trained at Whatcombe yearlings that had cost a fortune at Doncaster. The association lasted for a number of years during which patron and trainer were on the best of terms. When His Highness wrote to R.C.D. it was as "My dear Dick" and not as "Dear Sir." I certainly suspect that when a communication passed the other way it was addressed to "My dear Aga."

Then, after some years, a storm shattered the association. It began as a tiny breeze scarcely perceptible at first. The stable jockey at that time was another Irishman, Michael Beary. What was once a breeze became something that had to be taken seriously by both parties. The Whatcombe barometer was no longer at set fair; it went to stormy weather and then the storm broke one day at Newbury. Patron and trainer clashed, and in twenty-four hours all the Aga Khan's horses had passed out of Whatcombe for the last time. The trainer and the jockey declared war on each other. If there be virtue in forgiveness it has never been practised to this day to my knowledge by either of these vastly varying sons of Erin.

Certainly it is not my intention at this time of day to enter into details as to why relations were ruptured. Much more interesting is it to turn to a study of some of the notable race-horses that have served to make their trainer one of the outstanding successes of his time. Let me take first the case of Fifinella who, when she won those two substituted classic races in 1916 with war going on, did so in the colours of the late Sir Edward Hulton. She surely was an example of a high-class filly having peculiarities.

I shall never believe Dick Dawson was fond of her. She was much too catty and peevish to excite anything more than

admiration of her racing qualities when she chose to display them. I never set eyes on her for the reason that so many of us were otherwise engaged in those years, but when she was very much older and should have reached years of discretion I found her lazing about in one of Lord Woolavington's paddocks at Lavington Park in Sussex with a chestnut colt foal keeping her close company. I had listened some time before to the story of her spasms of bad temper when in training and found it hard to reconcile such behaviour with the tranquillity of maternal life. That foal, by the way, was to prove an individual of note. He was the racehorse we came to know as Press Gang, who though he never won a classic race was probably the best horse of his year as a three-year-old.

When Dick Dawson first set eyes on Fifinella as a yearling he thought she was a delicate-looking, poor little thing. She did, indeed, give the impression of being consumptive. Of course you know what happened. She improved out of all knowledge. She just had to. Her action was all that action should be, and in June as a two-year-old her trainer knew she could go. On September 8th, 1915, she was tried with this result:

Fifinella, 2 yrs.	—	9 st.	—	Stable Lad	1
Salandra, 2 yrs.	—	8 st. 7 lb.	—	Donoghue	2
Wist, 2 yrs.	—	7 st. 12 lb.	—	P. Mason	3
Analogy, 2 yrs.	—	7 st. 12 lb.	—	Digby	4

Won by two lengths; the same between second and third.

She went to Newmarket to be beaten a short head by Mr. Jack Joel's Telephone Girl, who was giving 10 lb. Before the Craven meeting at Newmarket the following year Fifinella was tried with Salandra over seven furlongs. She beat him easily, giving 10 lb. The beaten colt went to Newmarket and won the Wood Ditton Stakes. The objective with the filly was the One Thousand Guineas. It was a day when Fifinella chose to be unusually excited. Her trainer believes that Joe Childs, who was then riding for Sir Edward Hulton, was nervy too. Because she was awkward at the gate he hit her, which caused her to sulk so that she would do no more than canter behind Lord Derby's Canyon to be beaten half a length.

Three weeks later there was the race for the New Derby on the July course at Newmarket. Going into her box on the

morning of the race Dick Dawson found her in a shocking state of temper. They were trying to dress her over and plait her mane. She would not let them do either, and there she was carrying on and going round the box. What is more she got almost her own way in the end, for when she arrived on the course in the afternoon she had a half-plaited mane, while no one could say that her appearance did credit to those responsible for her grooming.

There was a most dramatic race. For more than half-way she would take no interest in it, and then suddenly she came with a dramatic rush, swooping down on the leaders to squeeze between two of them and win in a canter, though by no more than half a length. After this the quixotic creature settled down. When she reappeared two or three days later for the New Oaks her coat bore a sheen on it and the mane was plaited. But on the whole she was a bad tempered and peevish sort though she had never been hit in her life except on that occasion when Childs used the whip on her at the start of the race for the One Thousand Guineas. Her half-sister, Silver Tag, was not as brilliant, but she was divine in her temperament by comparison. She was rather mean looking and certainly her performances belied her looks. For she ran second to Lord Rosebery's Vacluse for the One Thousand Guineas, won the Cambridgeshire as a three-year-old under 8 st. 3 lb., the substituted Hunt Cup as a four-year-old under 9 st. 2 lb., and won the Champion Stakes though disqualification followed in favour of Let Fly, owned by the late Lord Wavertree. I have heard Donoghue say more than once that that decision was the most unjust thing to happen in the whole of his career. Silver Tag was a happy sort; her more distinguished half-sister, Fifinella, would try either to bite or kick you.

I suppose if there be truth in saying that a horse can be a man's best friend it might be possible to be his worst friend. However the point does not really arise when one thinks of Blandford, the horse that brought a fortune to the owner of Whatcombe. Always there are the ingredients of romance when one looks into the life story of a successful horse. The ingredients, of course, vary. In the case of Blandford I find a generous supply. It is open, of course, for any one of us to go to the ringside and buy a yearling if we like it and if our purse

permits. The inspiration came to Dick Dawson to buy Blandford out of the National Stud's lot of yearlings sent from Ireland to be sold at Newmarket. He paid no more than 730 guineas for him. Others made far bigger prices. One or two critics, who have sometimes done the right thing, and, therefore, believe in themselves, might have thought the son of Swynford and Blanche was rather too straight in his forelegs to make the training of him a certainty. It was the fashion to say this colt or that filly had Swynford forelegs if there was the suspicion of being back at the knee or some uprightness of the pasterns. As a matter of fact Blandford did not have a long racing career and his appearances were not many.

It is interesting to glance at this trial when he was a two-year-old. It was over four furlongs, which on a less severe gallop than Woolley Down, would be equivalent to five furlongs.

Blandford	—	—	8 st. 2 lb.	—	—	1
Malva	—	—	6 st. 8 lb.	—	—	2
Amorelle	—	—	6 st. 10 lb.	—	—	3

Won by half a length. Ridden by a stable boy he was produced at Newbury to win easily. It is specially interesting to note that Malva was in that gallop. She was owned by Lord Carnarvon and when she went to the stud she was mated with Blandford. I take it you know that the produce, sold to the Aga Khan as a yearling for 4100 guineas, proved to be Blenheim, winner of the 1930 Derby.

As a three-year-old Blandford was tried to be as good as Franklin, then a four-year-old that had won the Coronation Cup at Epsom. Franklin that day gave 20 lb. to Selene, who when her stud days arrived gained lasting distinction as the dam of the brilliant Hyperion, winner of the Derby and the St. Leger. Blandford was an easy winner of the Princess of Wales Stakes on the July course at Newmarket, and soon afterwards his racing career was brought to a close. I ought to have mentioned that Dick Dawson owned him in partnership with his brother, Sam Dawson. They established him at their Cloghran Stud, in the Co. Dublin, and when Sam died the horse, still bringing in a fine revenue because of his splendid successes as a sire, became the sole property of Dick Dawson.

I think of others of special note that passed through the Whatcombe training machine. There were the Aga Khan's classic winners, Salmon Trout and Blenheim. I never remember any race to be followed by such extraordinary repercussions as were the outcome of Salmon Trout's win of the St. Leger. The time has not yet come for the whole truth to be told of what was alleged and which I believe to be the facts. The horse came late on the scene, ridden by Carslake, to win in quite spectacular fashion. It seemed to me as if a set-piece had suddenly tumbled to ruins through the collapse of the favourite, Polyphontes, in Mr. Sol Joel's colours. I do not think Salmon Trout would have won had not the favourite cracked in his stamina. When he did so his collapse was rapid. His stride shortened, and then it was that the staying Salmon Trout came under full sail to win a dramatic race.

Why had certain bookmakers been so confident that Salmon Trout would not win? Why did several professional backers on this occasion turn bookmakers and lay above the market odds against the Aga Khan's horse? What did they think they knew? If I could write the answers to those questions there would be revealed the naked truth. Obviously they did not think the horse would win and it is open to anyone, bookmaker or backer, to have his opinion, and, if he likes, back his opinion. They were proved wrong and in several instances serious financial embarrassment followed. One bookmaker in particular had to find something like £50,000 on the following Monday, which was settling day. There were doubts as to his ability to do so. He found the money and paid, but he was crippled for a long time. Again, one wonders what these individuals thought they knew. That there was something in the wind was indicated to all with a knowledge of the betting market when the horse's price expanded instead of contracting as should happen when reacting to investments.

Salmon Trout was produced looking a perfectly trained horse. There was nothing wrong with him in a physical sense. His trainer, who is not easily satisfied, confessed to being pleased though unable to throw any light on the disquieting situation. Carslake did his part most correctly. What more could he do than win? The collapse of the non-staying favourite Polyphontes helped him in the way I have described. Certain men, who should not have been unhappy because the

favourite had been beaten, looked pained and even stunned as the winner settled the issue. They gave the idea of having been betrayed. By whom? The possibilities of boomerang damage had clearly never been entertained.

Do you recall the flying Mumtaz Mahal, the strapping daughter of The Tetrarch? She won first time out in Tetrarch-like style as a two-year-old in the Spring at Newmarket. This followed on a Whatcombe trial, when, carrying 9 st., she gave 22 lb. and an easy beating to the winner, Friar's Daughter (later the dam of Dastur and Bahram), and 10 lb. to Quakeress. Then again, just before the Champagne Stakes at Doncaster, she won this trial at five furlongs though the distance of the race is six furlongs:

Mumtaz Mahal, 2 yrs.	—	9 st.	—	—	1
Paola, 3 yrs.	—	8 st. 10 lb.	—	—	2

I think of Brownhylda, a filly somewhat plain looking but honest and good as she was to turn out, for whom Dick Dawson gave only 310 guineas as a yearling on behalf of his friend, Vicomte de Fontarce. For him she won the Oaks, which that year I had regarded as a certainty for Lord Derby's grand filly Tranquil. I do not understand to this day why Tranquil did not win, except, I suppose, that she was ever so much better suited by the course and distance of the St. Leger, for which she beat the Derby winner, Papyrus, while naturally she would have made much headway between Epsom and Doncaster. We were to be reminded a few years later of Brownhylda, who, meanwhile, had passed into the possession of the Aga Khan. She bred for him his second St. Leger winner, Firdaussi.

One thinks of Cos, who was one of the first yearlings bought by Mr. Lambton for the Aga Khan. She had been bred by Lord D'Abernon, for whom Mr. Lambton trained. The Aga Khan's buying agent was no doubt an admirer of the breed from which Cos came, or he would not have gone to such a big price as 5000 guineas, though, as a matter of fact, the price was trifling compared with some five-figure prices given later on the Aga Khan's account. I cannot think of one of the five-figure individuals that brought him any real reward. Cos, however, proved an inspired purchase. The first time she was tried she was beaten by Legality, who was

wrongly placed third by the judge for the Two Thousand Guineas of his year, when he had actually finished in about thirteenth position.

Some tactful intervention by Lord Jersey, who was senior Steward at the time, persuaded the Judge that he had really made a mistake and a correction was notified some minutes later. Legality was a grey horse. The one that had been omitted from the placings was Lord Woolavington's Knockando, ridden by Archibald. That American jockey had seen a head verdict given against him in favour of the late Lord Rosebery's Ellangowan. He must have seen a chance of doing some quick business, when, in reply to Lord Jersey's query in the presence of the Judge as to where he finished, he promptly declared with much emphasis; "I won it, my lord," Stewards and Judge, of course, were not standing for that, but at any rate Archibald, who was an alert American, was a trier.

Coming back to Cos one has recollection of seeing her auspicious debut at Ascot where she won the rich Queen Mary Stakes, which had just been made a feature of the incomparable meeting. It was for two-year-old fillies, and the net stake won by Cos was £2680. This win followed a four furlong trial on the stiff Woolley Down, when, carrying 9 st., she gave a two-length beating, plus 13 lb., to one of her own age named Azimuth, who had just finished second in a race at Salisbury. It is at the stud that Cos proved such a treasure of a mare. Her first foal was Costaki Pasha, who won the Middle Park Stakes as a two-year-old, and was an individual of some class. There followed a still better one in Rustom Pasha, who as I have said won the Eclipse Sakes, while her two-year-old of 1933, Mrs. Rustom, enabled the Aga Khan to take his place as the chief guest of the Gimcrack Club's banquet and deliver the oration expected of the owner of the winner of the Gimcrack Stakes.

I think, perhaps, the best sprinter sent out from Whatcombe in my time was Volta, if we except that astonishing Mumtaz Mahal. Yes, quite clearly she must be given pride of place. Yet Volta was an electric sort of horse when in the mood to throw off sparks, as it were, from his abundant store of vitality and pent-up energy. He only cost the father of the present Lord Carnarvon 300 guineas. As he developed with age he became more and more impetuous. He gave starters

a devil of a lot of trouble and jockeys many exciting moments. When he did leave the gate on anything like level terms he showed what devastating speed he had. He seemed to tear over the ground. I well remember seeing him lose many lengths at the start, and yet overhaul and beat such redoubtable fast sprinters as Friar Marcus and Torloisk.

I never saw two remarkable characters as racehorses trained at Whatcombe as were Woolley and Hallaton, but writing about sprinters brings to mind what their trainer once related to me about them. Woolley, as you may rightly suppose, was so named after the Down on which is laid out the chief gallop at Whatcombe. He was bred by a farmer who lived on the edge of Woolley Down. When two years old he sent him as a wild and very excitable colt to a trainer at Ilsley, not so very far away. He did not think much of him, and the farmer had him back and turned him out for another year. His son and daughter took to riding him, and, in fact, he was used as a hack by the flag steward at local Coursing meetings. About that time Captain Fred Forester, who had the Quorn Hounds, wanted a suitable horse for his second whip. Woolley was bought for the purpose, but as he was returned one must suppose he was not approved for the job.

By this time the farmer was getting fed up with his horse. He confessed to the Whatcombe trainer that he did not know what to do with him, whereupon Dick Dawson said he would have him for £50 if he found he could jump a hurdle. That was just before the Epsom Spring meeting. "All right," said the farmer, and Woolley came to Whatcombe. Dick Dawson tells me he forgot all about him for a week, and though he had not introduced him to a hurdle he sent the farmer a cheque for £50 and the horse was his. He began to use him as a hack, and one morning Colonel Percy Herbert, who happened to be at Whatcombe and was riding out to watch the work, said: "I'll bet you half a crown I beat you to the top of the hill." "Make it five shillings and it's a bet." That was the first race Woolley won and Dick Dawson never rode him again.

When he had been only a month in training he was taken, along with some fancied horses, to a meeting. They all lost except Woolley. He won his race and got them out of a bad meeting. He won again at Brighton and then failed at a mile. Frank Wootton who had ridden him said the horse did not stay.



His trainer now had the sauce to enter his £50 horse for the Portland Handicap, the chief sprint event of the Doncaster St. Leger meeting. They gave him 6 st. 7 lb. He started at 100 to 8, ridden by Frank Wootton, and won.

Hallaton was another extraordinary individual in the sense that he did not come into training until a six-year-old, and only then with a view to winning a jump race at Aldershot for his owner, Captain Allfrey, who had with Dick Dawson the horse's own brother, Snuff, a three-mile chaser. The six-year-old was a great raw-boned, ragged-hipped individual and prone to show much excitement. Just before he was due to go to Aldershot he had a bad go of coughing and he had to be put aside. When worked again his trainer, much to his surprise, realised that he would win a flat race. His first effort was at Worcester in a mile and a half Apprentices' Plate. The scared boy on his back was pulling him up the whole way.

When he did begin to win he ran up a winning sequence of eight. At Epsom he won the Royal Stakes, carrying the big weight of 9 st. 12 lb., giving Poor Boy, a very fast horse of the time, 1 st. 9 lb., and, with Wootton riding, won a head. That effort knocked him right out for the rest of that year, but the following year, as an aged horse and with Danny Maher riding, he won the Portland Handicap at Doncaster under the pretty big weight of 8 st. 6 lb. I have seldom heard of a parallel case; indeed it may be unique for a horse not to come into training until six years old and then become one of the best handicap sprinters of the period.

Of Whatcombe's two Derby winners in my time some will say that Trigo was appreciably better than Blenheim. The latter was a charming horse of quality, perfect actioned, and ideally adapted to be at his best on Epsom's mile and a half. The year he won the Aga Khan also ran Rustom Pasha, who unquestionably showed the more impressive form when galloped, though he was not tried with Blenheim. Beary, who was then riding for the stable, chose to ride Rustom Pasha. Now this colt made it quite clear, not so much before the Derby as later, that he could, or would, only show his best form when held back to the last moment and then brought with a short run. Bring him out too soon and then he would rapidly fade out to give the idea of being a non-stayer. In the race for the Derby he was showing in front long before Blenheim came

on the scene, and, sure enough, he began that fade-out, leaving Blenheim to go after Iliad and Diolite and beat them.

Perhaps that was a moderate year for high-class staying three-year-olds. Blenheim might have told us more had he raced again, but he went slightly wrong before the Eclipse Stakes and they would not risk getting him beaten if not satisfied that he was at his best. Harry Wragg made the discovery how to get the best out of Rustom Pasha, which explains why he came with what looked like a belated and dangerously-delayed effort to win the Eclipse Stakes by a narrow margin. Wragg, by the way, takes rank as one of the best, brainiest, and most intelligent jockeys of my time. He is for ever concentrating and thinking things out. It is the same characteristic he shows in pastimes like golf and lawn tennis and which has helped to make him so very efficient. I once asked him which was the best horse he ever rode, and he was divided between Miracle and Foxhunter, the former because he was so good even before his education had been anything like completed, the latter because he was a most wonderful stayer.

Trigo won the St. Leger as well as the Derby. That takes some doing although Coronach, and Hyperion a very few years later each showed how easy it was for them. He was not specially impressive and yet he must have had undeniable average merit as a Derby winner. His rather abject failure for the Two Thousand Guineas was the mystery happening of the year. Dick Dawson fancied him no end and did not think it possible to keep him out of the first three. At the end of six furlongs, perhaps less, he was absolutely done with. Jack Leach, who rode him, returned with the excuse that the colt could not stay. So we who had backed him at Newmarket left him out at Epsom, where he started at 33 to 1. Those who had backed him before the Two Thousand Guineas for the Derby round about 100 to 6 could not get out of their money because no one wanted to back such a failure. Against their will they had to stand their bets, and then had the thrill of their lives to see their money won for them even though not at 33 to 1.

## CHAPTER VIII

### A PHENOMENON AMONG RACEHORSES

The Tetrarch—Weird in colour—An outsize in thoroughbreds—Phenomenal in action and deeds—His amazing trials—His true merit never really probed—Fatal habit in action—His injury before the Derby—Brief but brilliant career.

I AM not sure that a two-year-old can fairly be brought into any argument as to which is the best racehorse one has ever seen. But if one can then I unhesitatingly name that phenomenon, The Tetrarch. The impression he made must have been very vivid, because it is still deep within me and his day was over a score of years ago. He came as something entirely new into my racing life, something to give colour to the sober tones of the conventional, something always to remember because he has never had an equal. I never saw St. Simon or Ormonde, both unbeaten through their brilliant careers. The supremacy of one or the other is generally conceded by their respective admirers, and one has been taught to bow down, so to say, and worship their immortal memories. I am a humble worshipper of greatness on the Turf, whether concerned with men or horses. So the name of The Tetrarch deserves to live not only with us who knew him, but with generations to come, although we only knew him as a two-year-old between April 17th, 1913, and September 2nd of that year.

The man whose name is chiefly linked up with the horse is not his breeder, the late Mr. "Cub" Kennedy, of the Straffan Station Stud in Ireland, or the fortunate owner Major Dermot McCalmont, but the trainer, Mr. H. Seymour Persse. He trained the sire, Roi Herode; he trained a smashing good filly named Nicola, whose dam was also The Tetrarch's dam, Vahren; and when the weirdly spotted grey was a yearling enjoying the freedom of the paddock at Straffan Station, he made up his mind, on setting eyes on him for the first time,

that here was a racehorse and one that he would make a point of buying when he came into the sale ring at Doncaster. And, having done so for the quite modest price of 1300 guineas, though it might have seemed wildly excessive to the wise men who at that time looked askance at a grey thoroughbred, especially one so freakishly marked, he proceeded to turn him into the wonderful racing machine which in due course was to be revealed to us.

Mr. Persse for as long as he can remember, I suppose, has been known as "Atty." Certainly he has for as long as I can remember. It is probably the hallmark in his case, as it is generally understood to be, of personal popularity. He is one of the group of Irish-born men who have made reputations and gained affluence as trainers in England. More than one of them contradicts the belief that Irishmen, especially if they be associated with horses, are possessed of an unusual sense of humour.

The trainer who settled at Stockbridge and from there sent out The Tetrarch and many other notable racehorses is not one of those I have in mind. Rather does he fulfil one's notion of the Irishman effervescing with quick wit and mischievous humour. It is so brightly personified in the trainer's friend, Captain Arthur Boyd Rochfort, V.C. "Atty" Persse has always liked to have a special attachment for one who would play up to his highly-developed sense of humour. So it was when I first knew him he was faithfully served in that respect by "Swears," who may still have been running his Wells' Club in Old Bond Street when he died some years ago. In later years Hughie Bagot Chester has been a joyous foil.

I am quite certain that Mr. Persse has long been in the front rank of trainers. He may be said to have distinguished himself in the school which turns out such well-endowed individuals. A fellow-Irishman in Frank Hartigan, of Weyhill, stands for that too. They both rode with distinction on the Flat, over fences, and over hurdles. On a mare called Aunt May, the trainer, who must be mentioned so often in this chapter, was placed third for a Grand National. We take for granted the courage of such a man. Many years later when he had a flourishing stable in Hampshire he chose to enjoy his winter leisure as a Master of Foxhounds in Co. Limerick.

His vivacity has been spoken of. Yet he was serious enough

in work, which, after all, has to be taken very seriously. His Stable has been conducted with efficiency born of organisation and necessary discipline. He expected loyalty from his employees and may not always have made full allowance for the frailty of human nature in face of the insidious temptations of suborners. Some trainers I have known have at last abandoned hope of keeping secrets within their establishments. They have wearied of the unequal battle against the outside world of poachers and spies. Not so the Stockbridge trainer. He has waged war, and not unsuccessfully up to a point.

Who can blame him? I certainly do not even though I am a newspaper man. But then my outlook probably governs my philosophy in this and matters which are akin. For I have never held with seeking or expecting confidences which the public are not entitled to share until the time comes when they can rightly do so. Perhaps that is why I have made and held friendships with many trainers and leading jockeys. They reciprocate the respect I have for them. Indeed, I could never have gained real success in discharging considerable responsibilities on a daily newspaper without there had been such respect.

One should be able to discriminate in putting the question which is reasonable and one which is unfair, and, having practised the code, I have to acknowledge with gratitude the assistance given often cheerfully but always willingly. In that way the public have been far better served than by round-the-corner methods of doubtful honour. I am sure it is the reason why there is no comparison, even between my early days as a writer and to-day, in the matter of accuracy of information bearing on the present, but especially on the future.

I have to acknowledge and I am doing so, not for the first time, the most invaluable help given me by Mr. Persse in disclosing the inner details of the young life of The Tetrarch. He made it possible for me to quote the details of the horse's three trials. They were extracted from his private trial book. As I am now publishing for the first time details of the trials of other notable horses it would certainly be inappropriate if I now omitted those which concern The Tetrarch.

First, however, let me give you my early impressions of the grey as I formed them on the occasion of his début on the

racecourse. I have a vague recollection of seeing him waiting to go into the sale ring, a big and apparently overgrown colt of a shade which might be described as "ironclad grey." There were darker shades of grey running into the legs, but, of course, what made him so freakish looking were the irregular splashes of white.

Less than a year later I got a real chance of taking a long look at him. He was in the paddock at Newmarket. I had forgotten all about him. Now here he was again, but changed except for those spots. So leopard-like he was in that respect, until, when he became advanced in years at the stud, the grey turned altogether to white as grey horses do turn very light grey or white with age.

The splotches varied in size. Some were egg-shaped, some elongated, and others again were just spots. They decorated his neck and into the shoulders. They were about the always slightly-dipped middle-piece, and, of course, they were on the abnormally powerful quarters with their great spread of muscle. The Tetrarch, as the son of Roi Herode and Vahren had been named, was to run for the Maiden Plate for two-year-olds. The Ring were inviting us to back one named Mount William who had just before won at Newbury, and still another at a shorter price than the Stockbridge colt was Guiscard, who bore the name of a horse owned in later years by Lord Derby.

I had no intention of having a wager. Just then, after the horses had left the paddock for the post, I ran into "Swears." I used to think he rather liked me, but then he liked so many. It was a profession with one of the last of the old Bohemians of Mayfair. In that husky voice of his (his vocal chords had long since ceased to serve him well) he murmured in my ear: "Go and have a sovereign on The Tetrarch. And don't say I told you!"

Dear old Swears! He could never keep a secret, which is why his great friend, the trainer, rarely told him anything he did not want broadcasting, but instead would tell him after the race that he (Swears) had had a pound or two with him. Obviously he knew something this time about the grey debutant from Stockbridge. I made my modest wager, influenced, maybe, by something the trainer once remarked to me.

"They say," he once said, "you should never back a

two-year-old first time out. I don't agree with that. At any rate, if I'm satisfied I'm not afraid to bet. And I've had some of my best wins on two-year-olds first time out."

The Tetrarch was one of them I do not doubt. He was the subject of some slight stir in the market, indicating that some covering money was coming from outside sources. Nevertheless, the best thing ever known in racing started at 9 to 2. And how did he win? With the greatest ease, finishing as he began, with a lobbing-like canter, though it must have carried him over the ground very fast, much too fast for all comers.

No wonder they stuck to their belief in backing a two-year-old first time out. Certain trainers would have just given him a run, thinking to educate him and give him confidence, to show him there was nothing really to be afraid of on the race-course. Then they could back him next time out although they might have to take 6 to 4 to their money. One smiles, on thinking about it, of The Tetrarch ever being in want of education. He was the master machine at all times.

Here are the details of his first trial:

April 5th.		5 furlongs.	
The Tetrarch, 2 yrs.	-	8 st. 7 lb.	- Donoghue 1
Captain Symons, aged	-	8 st. 7 lb.	- 2
South Parade, 2 yrs.	-	7 st. 7 lb.	- 3
Lily Baker, 3 yrs.	-	7 st. 7 lb.	- 4
Won pulling up in a canter.			

The difference between an aged horse and a two-year-old over five furlongs in April is 3 st. 5 lb. The Tetrarch gave that, plus a beating which could scarcely be calculated. Now, Captain Symons had decidedly useful form and was most reliable as a trial horse at home. Some time later he won a good handicap at Chester, giving the second, a three-year-old, 19 lb. Could this be a case of a trial too good to be true? It was decided to stage a trial a week later and this is what happened:

April 12th.		5 furlongs.	
The Tetrarch, 2 yrs.	-	9 st.	- Donoghue 1
Captain Symons, aged	-	8 st.	- 2
Land of Song, 2 yrs.	-	7 st. 7 lb.	- 3
Llangilda, 2 yrs.	-	7 st.	- 4
Won in a canter.			



THE TETRARCH AS HE WAS SOON AFTER GOING TO THE STUD



THE TETRARCH AFTER SOME YEARS AT THE STUD

Age has settled rapidly upon him. Note the dipped back towards which there was always a slight tendency from foalhood, and the almost white colour. Gone are the rocking-horse splotches.





You will notice that this time the two-year-old was set to give 14 lb. to the old horse and again he won in a canter. Including the weight for age, he gave Captain Symons no less than 61 lb. When Land of Song, who was given 21 lb. by the grey, first appeared on a racecourse he won the Windsor Castle Stakes at Ascot, beating Princess Dorrie, who a year later won the One Thousand Guineas, Honeywood, a Cambridgeshire winner, and twenty-four others. That is why, and because he was never beaten, I am justified in saying that The Tetrarch was freakish not only in colour but in performances, a phenomenon in fact.

His next appearance was for the Woodcote Stakes at Epsom on the day before the Derby was due to be run. Here he was as an even money chance. He could not lose apart from standing still at the start and continuing to stand still, or breaking his leg as the French grey horse, Holocauste, did when taking on Flying Fox for the Derby fourteen years before. I think Mr. Jack Joel must have fancied his colt, Parhelion, that day against The Tetrarch. He and his trainer, Charles Morton, were much respected in those days when they were doing battle at Epsom. Backers understood that Morton would never bring anything to a big meeting, certainly not to Epsom, unless it had a fair chance and sometimes much more than that. That is why The Tetrarch did not start at odds on. He streamed right away from them. Morton happened to be standing by me, and all he could say, giving first that nervous little ejection of saliva, was: "Well, I'm jiggered. He's a marvel and no mistake. He went past my horse as if he was going past a tree."

Just before Ascot, which followed a fortnight later, The Tetrarch was subjected to his third and last trial. Here it is as recorded in the private trials book at Stockbridge:

June 14th.		5 furlongs.	
The Tetrarch, 2 yrs.	—	8 st. 10 lb.	— Donoghue 1
Noramac, 6 yrs.	—	8 st.	— 2
Hallaton, aged	—	8 st.	— 3

Won easing up by ten lengths; two lengths between second and third.

The weight-for-age difference in favour of the younger horse in June is 35 lb. He gave 10 lb. in addition and a beating

which is certainly not over-estimated at 21 lb. "It was no kind of a gallop at all," was how Mr. Persse described it. Now a few days later Noramac won the Claremont Handicap of five furlongs, carrying 8 st. 10 lb. Though Hallaton was not the horse he was, I have mentioned elsewhere how he had won a Portland Handicap at Doncaster under 8 st. 6 lb. He must have been borrowed for purposes of the trial from the Whatcombe stable.

At Ascot, where he won the Coventry Stakes, he came in absolutely alone. The second was too far away to be got on the photographer's plate of the finish. There followed the National Breeders' Produce Stakes at Sandown Park, and this time there was nearly a tragedy; indeed, I cannot imagine any other horse overcoming what happened to him at the start, considering, too, that he was fully penalised at 9 st. 5 lb. When the start took place another horse jumped right across him and the leaders were lengths away before Donoghue could get him balanced and in hot pursuit. But he caught them and won by a neck, the only time he gave us any excitement at the Judge's end of the race. At Goodwood he won the Rous Memorial Stakes, this time beating the second, Princess Dorrie, by half a dozen lengths.

There followed the Champion Breeders' Foal Stakes at Derby for which Dick Wootton, who was then training for the late Sir E. Hulton, actually fancied Stornoway for some strange reason to beat him. He treated Stornoway as he did the best of the rest. It was the same story at Doncaster for the Champagne Stakes. That was his farewell appearance on a race-course though such a thing was undreamed of at the time. He rapped his off fore fetlock joint just before he was due to run for the Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton Park.

Veterinary treatment had to follow. More as a precaution than as a necessity he was pin-fired on the joint. In the Spring of the following year he was looked upon as being sounder than at any time in his life. He was excused running for the Two Thousand Guineas because his trainer thought him backward. He had no wish to take any unnecessary risk of defeat, and certainly there is nothing more unfair to a horse than to run him when unfit. Yet in the light of what happened the trainer has admitted it was a mistake not to have taken such risk as there was. Through Land of Song, who was just

beaten for third place, he must have won this first of the season's classic races.

Now the Derby loomed ahead, but first the Newmarket Stakes was missed. And because it, too, was missed there began to gain in pace an undercurrent of opposition to the horse for the Derby. Some bookmakers, and one in particular, showed a desire to lay such odds against him as would have been extravagantly generous in the case of a fit and sound Tetrarch. They continued to do so. Owner, trainer, and their friends continued to back him. Now who was right? The bookmaker, who had no known access to the stable? Owner and trainer, who must know?

Yet when bookmakers, especially those who add to their own shrewdness of judgment the capacity of buying their information, are found keen to lay against a favourite for a big race they inevitably create disquiet. Money talks, they say. It certainly does so in racing, and I respect this finger-post, guiding one to solutions as it so often does.

It will be said in the light of what happened that the bookmakers were right again. The Tetrarch had to be scratched because he badly hit himself in the old place. His case was hopeless now. The "I-told-you-so" folk and the "What-did-I-tell-you?" people came out into the open, and declared that they knew the horse would never run and that he had been wrong for a long time. The actual truth is that the bookmakers, as so often happens, had the luck on their side. It took the form of a horse, quite sound at one moment and going in his old form on the gallops, unexpectedly meeting with an injury which ended his career on the racecourse. But for that the layers would have lost a great deal of money, far more than they were prepared to lose. It will be said that they were gambling on the chance of a horse which has once hit himself when galloping doing the same thing again. If so the gamble came off, though it only did so very late in the day and when the horse was doing no more than an ordinary exercise canter.

Looking back on what created a big sensation at the time I am sure the Stockbridge trainer did the right thing at the right time. He might have announced through the Press, before the last fatal happening, that the horse was all right, as was, indeed, the case; for until it actually happened he believed it extremely improbable that the rapping would recur after the

precautions taken. He believed also that, without such a contingency happening, The Tetrarch represented the greatest certainty ever in racing to win the Derby. Supposing such an opinion had emanated from him people would have rushed to back him the world over. They would have lost their money, and losers—who are always charitable!—would have said after the accident: “He must have known. What did he get out of it?”

I must not close this chapter dealing with the brief career of such an astonishing young racehorse, and, as he was to prove, a very remarkable sire, without saying something more about his make and shape and his characteristics. I have said that it was in a paddock at Straffan Station Stud in Ireland that Mr. Persse first saw him. He thought him the finest yearling he had ever seen. The colt looked as if he owned the place. There was his unusual size and substance, while he was a wonderful walker. No horse could get his hind-leg so far in front of his fore-leg. But there was also something about his walk which probably explains why his racing career was short. As he put his fore-legs to the ground he seemed to “plait” with his feet, that is to say, they seemed to cross over as they reached the ground in turn. No doubt the characteristic influenced his action, at any rate, when going no more than half-speed. He would hit the off fore fetlock joint. It happened more than once during breaking and work as a yearling, again just before that Imperial Produce Stakes at Kempton Park, and, finally, before he was to have run for the Derby.

Let me give you the trainer’s own description of the horse as related to me twenty years ago. “His development,” he said, “was abnormal. He was a very strong-shouldered horse, possessed of a tremendous long rein, with a wonderful hind-leg which gave him that remarkable leverage. He had pronounced second thighs and was very high and truly moulded over the loins. A beautiful intelligent head, and slightly dipped in the back.”

Then, as to his temperament. As long as he was not upset I was told he was the quietest horse in the world, and the boy leading him would have to pull him along, but if he was upset he could be a perfect devil. They could never give him a dose of medicine in the usual way. If a stranger entered his box

and he thought something was going to be done to him he would at once clear the box of everyone. So physic had to be given to him in his mash. Perhaps he remembered the first time they tried to give him a ball of aloes. He closed his teeth on them and could never forget the bitter taste. Sometimes, out at exercise, he would suddenly stop when walking with the string and stare into space like something transfixed. No amount of urging would get him to move on. He would not stir until what looked like a trance had passed off. I remember him doing the same thing while walking round the parade ring at Goodwood. He stopped and adopted that strange statuesque pose, just gazing slightly upward. Why, one wondered, did he do it? What could he be thinking about, of whom, of what? He could not have been funkng the race because he seemed to take this and all others as a matter of course.

He went into that usual period of oblivion as every great horse does on retiring from training to stud life. The Tetrarch began his duty at his owner's stud in Ireland when he was a four-year-old, that was in 1914. His first produce could run as two-year-olds in 1917. He was an amazing success right from the outset. I am tempted to use again that word "phenomenal," but I must not abuse it. I might lessen the effect of its application to the horse's racing career. In 1919 he was the champion sire, his progeny having won stakes to the value of £27,976. In the two following years sons of his won the St. Leger, Caligula in 1920, and Polemarch a year later. In 1924 he had a third St. Leger winner in Salmon Trout.

Now I well recall it being said that a horse so brilliantly speedy would never sire stayers, but it takes something more than a sprinter to win a St. Leger. So soon did The Tetrarch reply to his critics. And yet it cannot be claimed for him that he has caused any marked recruitment to the staying material available for the racecourse. Salmon Trout, in his turn, sired an exceptional stayer, the big and robust looking Salmon Leap, who won the Goodwood Cup and other events over a considerable distance. There came a vintage crop of smart two-year-olds. They set a new fashion. We saw a reaction to it immediately at the sales of yearlings. All the rich men and women must have colts or fillies by The Tetrarch. Breeders, apart

from those in the favoured circle, found it hard to get their names on the horse's subscription list.

In 1920 his son, Tetratema, won the Two Thousand Guineas. Nine years later his grandson, Mr. Jinks, through Tetratema, won the Two Thousand Guineas. A granddaughter, through Tetratema, named Four Course, won the One Thousand Guineas of 1931 and was second for the Oaks, but there has been no horse or filly by The Tetrarch to win either the Derby or the Oaks. It is too late for one to come on the scene now. But, if he has not succeeded in starting a new line of stayers, at least he has begun a line of successful winners through his sons and daughters, while we owe it to him and his sire, Roi Herode, that there is scarcely a race run in these days in which there is not one or more grey horses.

By far his most successful son as a sire has been Tetratema, but he has yet to be credited with his first Derby or St. Leger winner. Brilliant sprinters, yes. One thinks of Tiffin and Myrobella, both at the top of the tree in their day, the former to be one of the exceptions to the rule that the best sons and daughters and grandsons and granddaughters of The Tetrarch were greys. Two of his progeny, Tetratema and Mumtaz Mahal, the latter so reminiscent in size, colour and brilliance of her sire, won the National Breeders' Produce Stakes at Sandown Park. Then did Tetratema in his turn have four winners of the race up to 1932. They were the three fillies Tiffin, Queen of the Nore, and Myrobella, and the lusty colt Thyestes.

If I have appeared to write at too great length about The Tetrarch it is because his personality and performances are unforgettable memories, while he has started a new line of fashion which may or may not endure. I am much less satisfied about that than of all else associated with his name.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE TWO MOST TRAGIC DERBY WINNERS

Craganour in 1913—Mr. Bower Ismay and his trainer—"Vitriolic and Bucolic" Robinson—The scene at Epsom—Tenseness after the weighing in—An unforgettable memory—Stewards as prosecutors and judges—Were they right?—Humorist in 1921—A grim memory—Sudden death follows Derby triumph—Charles Morton's great tribute.

**T**RAGEDY, swift and grim, was associated with two winners of the Derby. In 1913 Mr. Bower Ismay, with becoming pride of ownership, led in his horse Craganour after it had beaten one named Aboyeur a head. Half an hour or so later this horse was led out by a heart-broken stable lad. It had been disqualified for the greatest of all races. Aboyeur had become the Derby winner. He was led out by a dazed and much mystified stable lad. The great public favourite, though first home, had been dethroned. A 100 to 1 chance, by the will of the Stewards, reigned in his stead.

In 1921 Humorist won the Derby by a neck. He was the first of Steve Donoghue's "hat trick" of Derby winners at Epsom. He has said, and we who saw the race believe him, that on this colt he rode the best race of his life at Epsom. Humorist had been bred by his owner. Here was one to take the place at the stud of Sunstar, the hero of ten years before. He would bring in much revenue after winning lots of other valuable races. For he was the Derby winner and his breeding was immaculate. Less than a month later Humorist was found dead in his stable. He had bled to death from internal hæmorrhage.

My mind goes back to that disastrous day in 1913. Let us see who the principals were. The horses are dead. Some of those connected with them have passed on. Bower Ismay and his trainer, W. T. (Jack) Robinson, did not get a new lease of life. Of the Stewards, whose decision so stunned the world,



all three are dead. Lord Rosebery lived for a good many years. So also did Lord Wolverton. I am not suggesting that the pain of doing what they conceived to be their duty affected their health, but I have always understood that the late Major Eustace Loder felt a very considerable reaction.

Mr. Ismay gave some high prices for yearlings and had them with the vitriolic and bucolic Robinson, who lived and trained at Foxhill. Robinson had personality if only because of a temper which fairly blazed at times and made him the terror of stable lads while the seizure lasted. But it was short-lived and he would retrieve a keen sense of humour. Because he had it he got on so well with the late Frank Curzon, who won the Derby a few years later with Call Boy. I have no doubt he was a first-class trainer too. He specialised in the winning of handicaps, the bigger the better, of course. Before my time he had brought off some big betting coups both for himself and his betting owners.

Mr. Ismay was regarded as a man of wealth. His family were associated with the White Star Line, which in those years brought them much profit. He gave me the impression of natural shyness without the slightest desire to explore those roads which might lead to membership of the Jockey Club. Front rankers in the Jockey Club, on the other hand, showed no special interest in him. The Foxhill stable was not a fashionable one. It can be more truthfully described as a betting one, though one would not be justified in saying that Mr. Ismay was a betting owner. So far as I know his wagers would be of quite modest size. For a time he had some horses in training under National Hunt rules, and because of the running of one of them the trainer's licence held by Tom Coulthwaite was withdrawn.

That he believed a big injustice had been done to an innocent man goes without saying, but the world moves on. It showed no emotion because a trainer had been thrown out of his job for the time being. Big Injustice No. 2, in the mind of Bower Ismay, was the disqualification of his Derby winner. There must have been bitterness in his mind, but he did not show it outwardly. His attitude was that of the cynic. He found some peace for his mind by joining up with a cavalry regiment soon after the outbreak of war the next year. He

died soon after it had ended from what I understood to have been a long illness of sleeping sickness.

Craganour was by Desmond from the mare Veneration II. The Sledmere Stud purchased the mare privately in 1910 for £1700 with her foal by Desmond and in foal again to Lord Dunraven's horse. The foal was Craganour. Veneration II bred eight yearlings that in all made a total of 28,700 guineas. Craganour, as I remember him, was of an unusually light shade of bay. A bad-coloured bay is usually condemned as soft of constitution. Craganour was not that. He was also not what you would describe as a hard bay. He cost his owner 3200 guineas.

As a two-year-old he was an Ascot winner, which signifies the possession of some class. The point is that on the balance of his two-year-old form he was accepted as favourite for the Derby. Now Robinson was an early season worker. He planned to have winners, if possible, on the first day of Lincoln. It was at Liverpool in the first week of racing in 1913 that he brought out Craganour as a three-year-old. The colt was beaten for the Union Jack Stakes. He ran well and he was, of course, fully penalised, but he could not win. He was excused on the ground of being backward. Bower Ismay and his trainer were not dismayed.

Their jockey was W. Saxby, and he was on the colt when the judge gave the Two Thousand Guineas to Mr. Walter Raphael's Louvois. I thought Craganour had won comfortably. The other one had beaten him a head. Until the number was in the frame I never had any doubt as to which had won. Saxby's riding could not possibly have created a doubt. He rode with the confidence of one who is satisfied he has got the issue safe beyond any measure of doubt. Louvois was wide of Craganour on this very wide course of Newmarket. I think to-day that Saxby was deceived by the angle. If he had not been he would have realised the seriousness of a critical situation. He would have asked for more from Craganour because there was certainly more to give. He would not have been lulled into such a false sense of security.

We were not to know it at the time, but this was merely the curtain raiser to the drama waiting to be enacted at Epsom. Of course they blamed Saxby after they had finished castigating the Judge. That official, the late Mr. C. E. Robinson, some time later remarked to me: "They are saying that Saxby won

on Mr. Ismay's horse. What they should say is that he *ought* to have won."

I have related elsewhere how Saxby was taken off the horse and how Danny Maher on Craganour, in the race a fortnight later for the Newmarket Stakes, showed the form in the Two Thousand Guineas to have been at least ten pounds or fourteen pounds wrong. They waited until the last moment in the hope of getting Maher to ride the favourite at Epsom. He was claimed for Lord Rosebery's filly Prue. Thus was the undoing of Craganour slowly being schemed by Fate. They brought from France Johnny Reiff, now grown into manhood since his winning days in England as a boy jockey when the invaders from America were raiding us.

There can have been few, if any, more dramatic Derbys both in the events leading up to it and as enacted in the race itself, followed, of course, by the sensational sequel. A suffragette, seeking martyrdom for her cause, though at the price, if necessary, of her own and other people's lives, rushed out on to the course as the horses were rounding Tattenham Corner to throw herself in front of the King's horse Anmer. She died for her Cause. Anmer, in falling, inflicted fatal injuries on this wretched martyr. Herbert Jones, who four years before had won the Derby on Minoru for King Edward, was mercifully spared. He escaped with nothing more serious than a shaking.

One turned to watch the leaders. Craganour in the violet and primrose hoops of Mr. Ismay was well there. His tens of thousands of supporters must have been cheered. But what was that on his left holding the rails position and going strongly? It was in the white jacket of Mr. A. P. Cunliffe. Few knew it at the time, but this was Aboyeur, ignored and unconsidered until now, a 100 to 1 chance in fact. You know what that means. Scarcely a soul can have expected it to win. But five years before there had been a 100 to 1 winner in Signorinetta. Ten years before that there had been a 100 to 1 winner in Jeddah, and, I suppose, an owner can believe in miracles in the sense that what has happened so recently might happen again. So he takes the forlorn chance. The prize is great. The odds to the cost of entry and starting are alluring. There is a greater prize than that. The value of the Derby winner becomes enormously enhanced.



A REMARKABLE PICTURE OF THE FINISH OF CRAGANOUR'S DERBY

It shows how Aboyeur and Craganour have come right away from the rails and how they are leaning on each other. At the moment the offender clearly is Aboyeur. Day Comet, who was alleged to have been interfered with by Craganour, is seen behind and right away from him.



No one can really say what happened. We know there was bumping. We know, too, there was something of a feud because of the supersession of Saxby and the bringing of a jockey from France for the favourite. Someone obviously started the rough riding. I do not blame the rider of either Craganour or Aboyeur. All we could see was that the horses came close together, during which we must assume a Roland was returned for every Oliver. And, possibly, one or two of the others were not exactly looking on. As they were finishing, and actually as they went past the winning post, Aboyeur was distinctly leaning on Craganour. Camera evidence entirely bears this out.

. . . . .

Craganour is back in the narrow unsaddling enclosure. It was done away with when the present Grand Stand was erected in place of the old makeshift structure, which, however, had sufficed for so many generations. The jockeys had passed into the weighing-room. Craganour was heaving, and sweating, and blowing fairly hard. He leaned on one hind-leg, resting the other one as horses often will do after they have had a hard race. Bower Ismay was still saying: "Thank you very much," to all who were coming up to give him a handshake and congratulations.

Robinson's face had assumed a deep crimson tint. He was florid at any time. His bowler hat was off while he mopped a perspiring brow. He was like a man to whom relief had come at last. The Derby triumph was really achieved. A great load of anxiety and worry had been thrown off. Now he could look forward to Monday morning's post and the big cheques it would bring to him.

But why the long delay in calling the "All Right," until which signal, telling that the jockey has formally weighed-in, a winner may not leave the enclosure? Could there be anything wrong? Bookmakers were counting their losses. They had been hard hit because the horse that had been backed for months past, and had started at the very short price of 7 to 4, had won. Backers were exultant and had commenced to "celebrate." They never dreamed of the drama that was going on behind the scene.

"What's the matter?" Robinson asked of me. "There

can't be anything wrong," he went on. "They can't be objecting. You didn't see anything, did you?" I knew at that moment that a great fear had come upon him. "They can't be objecting," he had said, as if to reassure himself.

"They were very close together," I commented. "And they came away from the rails," I added. "But it will be all right. They do not disqualify Derby winners."

The owner of Aboyeur is alive to day, but I do not hesitate to say that I think he is the man who would have had no qualms about lodging an objection if he thought that by doing so on grounds which he approved he might be awarded the Derby. Bear in mind that he had taken no part through his jockey, Piper, in instigating the objection.

Suddenly the shout of "All Right" was heard in that little enclosure. "Thank goodness for that!" were the words of a much-relieved trainer. "Phew!" he added, "I was beginning to get worried." Craganour was now being walked towards the gate leading out on to the course when there came a sharp order to bring the horse back. "Who," said the owner of the voice, "had given authority for the 'All Right' to be given?" The speaker was Lord Durham, looking rather fierce and terribly serious.

Even then it seemed unbelievable that there was an objection. Bower Ismay suddenly became pale like one who has been given a shock. Robinson looked frankly incredulous. Friends told them not to worry. Everything would be quite all right. Perhaps the jockeys were being interviewed and lectured, though such need not require the continued presence in the enclosure of the winner. The very worst had happened, and did happen. Piper, it is said, was apprehensive that he might be reprimanded for not keeping his horse straight. If that be so then you can understand why he did not encourage Mr. Cunliffe to approve the lodging of an objection.

I came across Mr. Wilfrid Purefoy, that very astute man in his day who had long been associated with Mr. Cunliffe when the owners in the Druid's Lodge Stable brought off big handicap coups with fair regularity. He, of course, was vastly interested in Aboyeur, and, indeed, had a "tenner" on him at the starting price. He did not seem to know what was going on. Can you who knew him imagine "Pure" missing a

chance of getting a race on which something depended, above all a Derby? A small thing like loss of popularity would not have worried him. He and Mr. Cunliffe were not to be embarrassed. The Stewards undertook, self-imposed, according to powers not long in force, to lodge the objection. Thus they assumed the rôle of prosecutors, and, being the appointed judges, it followed automatically, after listening to such evidence as they called, that they upheld an objection, instigated and framed by themselves. The decision was announced in these terms:

"The Stewards objected to the winner on the grounds that he jostled the second horse. After hearing the evidence of the Judge and several of the jockeys riding in the race, they found that Craganour, the winner, did not keep a straight course and interfered with Shogun, Day Comet, and Aboyeur. Having bumped and bored the second horse, they disqualified Craganour and awarded the race to Aboyeur."

The statement is rather curiously worded. It tells the grounds of objection in the first sentence—jostling. Yet, after hearing evidence, other offences were proved, "interference" and "not keeping a straight course." It was unnecessary to tell us that they listened to evidence of jockeys who rode in the race. Of course they did. Presumably they were not unaware of a strong undercurrent among certain of the jockeys against the connections of Craganour because the jockey who had ridden the horse in the Two Thousand Guineas had been sacked. There was an alleged grievance. It is well known that the Judge's evidence supported the case for the prosecution. Stewards placed much reliance on the evidence of the late Mr. C. E. Robinson. I think he was a very fair man, and we may be sure that he saw happenings which should not have occurred. Day Comet was owned by the late Mr. Leopold de Rothschild. I am aware that this owner was annoyed at the time because he felt his horse had been one of the victims. Shogun was ridden by Frank Wootton, who was very much criticised for sticking too long to the rails instead of coming round and giving his horse a clear run. The friends of Shogun said their horse would certainly have won but for being thus pocketed. Did Wootton blame Reiff on Craganour for the pocketing? If so the Stewards would get the evidence they were seeking.



Were the Stewards right? According to their statement they were overwhelmingly so. They framed the chief indictment and then added two others, on all of which they found Craganour guilty. Yet how much better it would have been if public opinion could have rid itself of the feeling that the parts of the prosecutors and judges had been merged. It is at best a dangerous principle and so easily liable to miscarriage of justice. Apparently it was not a case of six of one and half a dozen of another, though the camera disputes such evidence. But, assuming that it had been, then the winner might so well have been given the benefit of the doubt, leaving the jockeys to be warned about their future riding. It was a most important point that no objection was lodged in the interests of those connected with the second, men who do not entertain any susceptibilities about that alleged sentiment of never on any account lodging an objection.

For the Epsom Stewards of that year it can be pointed out that they were undoubtedly men of honour, who found themselves confronted with a most unpleasant task from the execution of which they would not flinch. They had seen what they regarded as a breach of the rules of fair racing, and, in their opinion, Craganour was the aggressor and the guilty one. The rule had been made to be obeyed, and it was their duty to apply the unpleasant consequence. It mattered not that the jockey of the second, apparently, had no cause of complaint; ditto the owner. They had seen for themselves.

It will be said the bitterness and public anger over the decision had boiled up because the one punished had been a 6 to 4 favourite. If the 100 to 1 Aboyeur had been first home and then disqualified there would have been most wholehearted approval and the Stewards would have been hailed as just and honest men! It is the comment of the cynic who can see no true adjustment of the scales when they are loaded with the weaknesses of human nature and the worship of the golden calf. I had no bet on the race of any description.

What should I have done had I been a Steward? I should have seen the waving about and the irregular course kept by the leaders. I should also have seen the blow for blow, so to say, given. I should have waited for action on the part of the second, allowing them time for some quick thinking, and then, if none had been forthcoming, I might have asked the jockey

of the second if he wished to object or if he was satisfied. Who more likely to find the solution?

Poor Craganour! What had he done to be made the plaything of a cruel Fate? To win the Two Thousand Guineas and not get it according to all who quarrelled with the judge. To win the Derby and still not get it, because three men condemned him as the villain in a drama in which there was more than one villain. Bower Ismay could not bear to keep him. Every time he looked at him there would be memories, each one like a knife thrust. If he kept him there was no telling what further tragedy he might be the cause of. So, when an agent, acting for the owner of a big stud in the Argentine, made an offer it was accepted. The price paid was £30,000. Craganour never ran again in England, or, indeed, in his new home. I am glad to think his luck changed with his change of country. For he was undoubtedly a conspicuous success as the sire of many important winners. So is the course of racing history vastly changed by so little. In this case it was changed by the verdict of Three Just Men, by which fortunes were made and lost during the short time spent over deliberation on that crazy afternoon at Epsom, by which, too, breeders in this country were deprived of the services of a horse that would certainly have made a name for himself.

What's in a name? Sometimes grim irony. Humorist lies under the ground in a trim little horse cemetery at the Childwick Bury Stud, the place where he was foaled, within a month of winning the Derby. Stark tragedy that was. He bore the name to dovetail so appropriately with all the gaiety and triumph that follows in the long, long trail of a popular Derby winner. Look at his breeding too. A son of Polymelus and Jest. Jest, a daughter of Black Jester and Absurdity. Here, perhaps, was the work of the grand-sire Black Jester, though he had taken his place in the records as a winner of the St. Leger. Jest had won the Oaks of 1913. I remember her as a sweet filly, radiating quality but of rather delicate constitution. She bred one or two others, a filly named Laughter for one, that were anything but robust. I have no doubt she transmitted to Humorist the physical weakness that periodically attacked him and finally proved fatal.

Yet Polymelus had made a habit of ranking as champion

sire, which means that he had sired stock of exceptional ability. Jest was a classic winner. Humorist won the Derby after a grand race to defeat the slightly shorter-priced favourite, Craig an Eran, by a neck. Mr. J. B. Joel's horse must have had magnificent courage to do that, for, with the knowledge of the tragic sequel, the disease must have been deep-seated then. Donoghue was rightly praised for his riding of the winner. Brennan had to be the target of those who were on the side of Craig an Eran. They declared that he had been outridden by Donoghue.

It is almost inevitably so. Yet this Manton jockey had been good enough when on Craig an Eran he won the Two Thousand Guineas at 100 to 6. Then Humorist had been favourite at 3 to 1 and he had stopped rather abruptly just as he looked like winning. Lemonora, also from the Manton stable, but in Lord Manton's ownership, had also beaten Humorist, who finished in third place.

Odd that the same horses should have filled the places at Epsom. There was, however, the important reshuffling. This time Craig an Erin was the favourite at 5 to 1. Humorist had lapsed from favour immediately after the Two Thousand Guineas. It was thought his failure was due to lack of stamina. Such was my reading at the time. But then, as the Derby drew nearer, there set in a reaction. I think it was that his very able trainer, Charles Morton, found reason to be more satisfied about him. Cautious he was at all times, but if he did give encouragement then one felt confidence brewing up. Mr. Joel understood him well. Sometimes he chaffed him for finding a fresh doubt after disposing of another. I do not think he ever interfered or opposed a policy.

The conduct of the Childwick Bury Stud was the owner's affair. The training of the horses sent from it into the racing stable was Morton's business. When, therefore, he told Mr. Joel that Humorist was better pleasing him and that he might back him at the odds then prevailing the hint was undoubtedly acted upon. The public followed because of their respect for the trainer and admiration of his fine record of successes, and so it was that Humorist started at 6 to 1, though strictly on form both Craig an Eran and Lemonora had the beating of him. At Manton I am certain they believed Lord Astor's colt was definitely the better of their pair.

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Morton, by the way, was a strangely young old man. Always spruce and neat in his dress he was also quiet in his speech and manner—except, I daresay, at Wantage, where, in the routine of stables and work, nerves would be frayed and irritation never concealed. He belonged to the old school in this way: he believed almost fanatically in the importance of personal supervision down to the minutest detail. That is why he never left home unless he had to be with his horses on the racecourse. It is why he never finally said "Good Night" to his horses when they had been rugged up, when they were quietly feeding, and the lads had finished for the day. An hour later the little man would leave his own dinner table, or, perhaps, precede his meal by personally finding out whether this or that horse had eaten up. If the manger had been cleared then all was well: if not, and the horse was standing listless, he knew there must be something amiss the cause of which had to be ascertained. If reassured he would return to enjoy two of the good things that had mellowed his life all these years. The glass of champagne and the best Corona cigar possible to obtain.

He has written an autobiography of exceptional interest, though doing his own great ability scant justice. That was his modest way which was natural to him. I have congratulated him following one of the frequent big wins he had for Mr. Joel. "That's very nice of you," he would reply, "but really the credit is to Mr. Joel. I could not have winners if he did not send me the horses good enough to win." We know that is only half a truth. It was the instinct that was in him to train, the loyalty which made conscientious service a pleasure as well as a duty, and the great store of knowledge and experience on which he was able to draw: these attributes made him the master he was of his art.

He had notable winners before my time, Sceptre for one when Mr. R. S. Sievier had her, but in my own experience I have no doubt his two finest achievements were gained with Sunstar and Humorist. He may be said literally to have nursed Humorist to his Derby victory. Sunstar was a lame horse for at least ten days before his Derby triumph of 1910, how lame we were not to know until Charles Morton made the confession long afterwards. It was touch and go that he even got him to the post at all, though the secret was

marvellously well kept or he would not have remained at the short price to which he was brought, following his exceptionally stylish wins of the Two Thousand Guineas and the Newmarket Stakes. No doubt the damage was done when he won the latter race on very hard going. We know that the trainer somehow kept Sunstar fit and without breaking him down. The breakdown actually occurred in the race, probably while making the descent of Tattenham Corner, though the courageous horse held on to win by a comfortable two lengths from Stedfast, who had been last to leave at the starter's end.

Humorist did not break down. One looked forward to seeing him at Ascot a fortnight later. I saw him all right, but he did not run. It was quite early, on a morning of exceptional beauty, that I came across Mr. Joel's horses with their trainer out on the course. He was looking anxious and worried. He had every need to be. Humorist had coughed and apparently ruptured a small blood vessel. Of course he could not run. He was sent back to Wantage. The hæmorrhage must have been fast coming to him then. One morning, less than a month after he had been hailed as the Derby winner, as the lads were coming into the yard to begin their day's work, a pool of blood was seen to have issued under the door of the box which sheltered Humorist. Inside there was the Derby winner lying dead in the straw bedding. He had bled to death during the night.

A few days later, when he had got over the first great shock, the trainer was able to send me a most interesting letter about the horse, and here it is published now for the first time:

"When he arrived here with the other yearlings in October I thought we should be very unlucky if, out of four of the colts, we did not find something out of the common. The four I allude to were Humorist, Thunderer, Hamlet, and Stargazer. They were about as good looking and well bred yearlings as one could wish to see in any batch.

"Humorist was a beautiful mover in the breaking field as well as a sweet tempered fellow, no trouble, and took everything as a matter of course. He went on well and continued to thrive and please us in every way until the following Spring, when he began to give us a little anxiety. For instance, he lost

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substance and got light, and looked dull in his coat, although in his work his action was always perfection.

"I did everything I could think of to get him more to my liking but never succeeded, and when the time arrived for him to be properly tried for his first engagement, the Woodcote Stakes at Epsom, I was fully persuaded in my own mind that he was nothing like what he should be. However, he won his gallop and showed us plainly that he was a very good colt.

"He won the race, but the performance was not at all convincing, in fact I would not have been surprised had he been beaten, so dull and bad in his coat and listless did he seem in the paddock before the race. I took him to Ascot to run for the Coventry Stakes, but he started coughing after he arrived there and could not run, and I could not get him into anything like proper trim until Doncaster, which was his next outing.

"He ran, as you know, in the Champagne, and collapsed in a very similar manner to what he did in the Two Thousand Guineas, in each case looking all over a winner within striking distance of the winning post. His other performances are well known to yourself and the racing public. He was a horse of brilliant speed, and was never beaten in a trial and was a horse of the most loveable disposition, one of the freest and handiest horses I have ever had to do with.

"In view of Mr. Joel's great interest in breeding the blow must be irreparable outside the immense value in money which from his fine breeding on the sides of both sire and dam, combined with his performances, is plain to anyone who knows anything of such matters. I must say that Mr. Joel took his great blow like a thorough sportsman and was much more concerned for my sake than for his own. But to breed a Derby winner and to form plans with an eye to his future stud career and then to lose the horse within about a month after winning the Derby and without giving anyone time to contemplate such a tragic end to everything, such as this is, so far as the horse is concerned, is enough to knock anyone down."

The Derby was run on June 1st, 1921. The letter is dated July 1st, 1921.

## CHAPTER X

## LORD DERBY: EMINENCE AS BREEDER AND OWNER

Imagination, vision and inspiration—Joy in the breeding of the racehorse—Family keenness on breeding and racing—A discovery in the House of Lords—How an Ascot Gold Cup winner came by his name—Lord Derby and his help to save racing in the War—Swynford—Stedfast—Swynford—Sansovino—Pharos—Hyperion—Unforgettable memories.

EVERY biographist knows how much easier it is to write of the dead than of the living; every reader equally is under no illusion as to why it is easier. The former, striving to be honest, may, nevertheless, feel himself shackled as he strives to be truthful without hurting, honest without giving mortal offence, and temperate without being fulsome. The latter needs reassuring that there would be no startling difference between the biography and that which would be posthumous. These impressions make no pretence of being anything more than superficial, though sincere at that. For instance, it would take very much more than a few random pages to give the reader an adequate appreciation of Lord Derby and the magnificent part he has filled, and will, I hope, continue to fill for many years, as a breeder and owner of racehorses. He has had great successes; he has known what it is to ride the crest of the wave. And there have been rides on the toboggan which is a one-way vehicle. In the world of breeding and racing no one can stay for ever on the crest, even though he may think he is entitled to a permanent place on it. So much time has to be spent in the painful process of climbing or in resisting the slips back.

We know that an ancestor gave the name to the greatest of our races. The Earl of Derby inherited the stud and stable which his father began to establish in 1894. That year saw the beginnings of the Stanley House stable and the foundations of the stud which have been heard of in every country of the world possessing any interest in the racehorse. That the stud had sure foundations, which were wisely built upon, is indicated by the fortunes of the racing stable which it fed. Sometimes

they blazed up as I have said; there were times when they sagged; but never did they dwell in the doldrums. It was because there were imagination and vision, inspiration, and what I might describe as firm hands on the driving-wheel. And there were enthusiasm and understanding by Lord Derby, so that stud and stable were never so eminent as forty years later.

He once remarked to me that although his racing successes gave him much pleasure, he, nevertheless, got deeper satisfaction as a breeder. In other words, the breeding of the racehorse interested him more than the racing of it. I can well believe that. There is big money to be won on the racecourse. I am not thinking of betting, because I do not think Lord Derby ever bets, nor has he done so for many years, except, maybe, for some trifle to add to the thrill of winning. He knows that fortune on the racecourse can but be the reflex of the success of sires and mares and the intelligent mating of them. After that, the proper rearing of the foals and that very important transitory stage when they are yearlings. There must be great fascination in watching the return of the good winning mare to the paddocks in which she once stood at the foot of her mother, deciding on her mating, then the coming of the foal, the critical examinations of him as he gains in growth and character, the action shown when there is the desire to test the looseness of limb, and when knowledge comes of ability to gallop with astonishing fleetness of foot. So the retired mare becomes the mother of a racehorse in training, and the pleasures of the breeder become the joyous anticipations of the owner.

The Hon. George Lambton trained for Lord Derby and his father before him for forty years, excepting for a brief period of striking successes when Frank Butters was the trainer and the ex-trainer became the manager of the stable. The arrangement did not last for more than a few years. It ended when, as an incident in a scheme of economy which Lord Derby felt bound to bring about, the services of the trainer were dispensed with, and Mr. Lambton was brought back to his old position.

As I write the forty-year-old regime is ended. It has happened too recently for me to write about now, and so I have nothing to say. Of late years we know that Lord Derby has not been able to go racing as much as he would like to have



done. It is not the case that advancing years have held him in check. Rather has it been a profound sense of public duty. It has found expression in his territorial stronghold of Lancashire, Nationally and Imperially. Five times horses owned



## "HOW HAPPY HE COULD BE WITH EITHER."

*An inspired drawing by the Derby Club's honorary cartoonist, Tom Webster, and now published by his kind permission. It was originally reproduced on the front of the menu of the first Derby Club Dinner, held under the Presidency of Lord Derby in 1933, in London.*

by him have won the St. Leger, but he only witnessed two of those classic triumphs, and they were as far apart as Swynford in 1910 and Hyperion in 1933. Lady Derby goes racing perhaps even less, though no member of the family could possibly be more interested than she is both in the racing stable and the stud. Moreover, Lady Derby conducts her own stud

at Swynford Paddocks, which formerly she held in partnership with her daughter the late Lady Victoria.

No one can doubt that the tragedy of her death has clouded the whole of the lives of Lord and Lady Derby. I do not find it easy to touch even lightly and with the greatest respect on this saddest of episodes. Well do I know that Lady Victoria was just as enthusiastic about racing and breeding as her parents were. She attended every race meeting she could, whether in England or France. In France she was just as popular and beloved by all classes as she was in England. It is surely remarkable that the stud which mother and daughter maintained with such perfect enthusiasm should have produced the first of the progeny of Fairway and Bosworth to win races in the year 1934. For Lord Derby Fairway won the St. Leger and other great races. Bosworth won for him the Ascot Gold Cup.

Other members of the family are just as keen, even Major the Hon. Oliver Stanley, now a member of the Cabinet of the National Government, who I am sure takes the greatest interest in the racing of his father's horses. Nothing could exceed the understanding and knowledge for one so young as Lady Victoria's daughter, Miss Ruth Primrose. A daughter-in-law, Lady Maureen Stanley, purchased one named Kiss me Quick, not very successful perhaps, but a pioneer of her hopes in ownership.

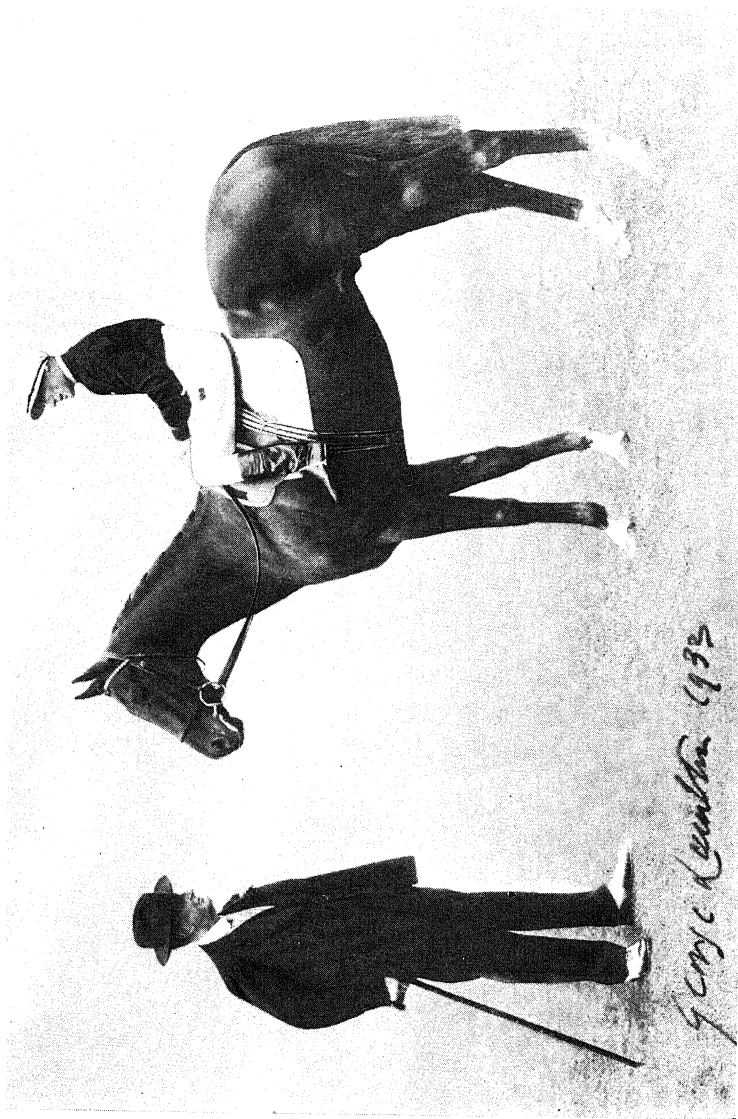
Clearly there is in the Derby family a love of racing which must be hereditary; in fact, looking back for many generations, there has not been one that did not have horses and raced them. Perhaps there was one exception. Lord Derby's uncle, who was succeeded by Lord Derby's father and therefore belonged to the same generation, could not be said to have had anything but a dislike of racing. However, Lady Emma Talbot, who was Lord Derby's father's only sister, was his constant companion on many racecourses. She died at the age of ninety-three, up to which great age she retained all her interest in racing. It was after her death that Bosworth was foaled, but she had always begged Lord Derby to give the name of Bosworth to any promising yearling that he might breed, because it was on Bosworth field that the title of Lord Derby came to the family.

In his quiet way the father of the present Peer was very fond of racing. He attended many of the chief race meetings, and

always took the greatest interest in the stud. To the Lord Derby of to-day he told a remarkable story about his father, grandfather of the subject of this chapter. There were two fillies running for the Oaks one year, one carrying the Derby colours and the other with colours strikingly similar. Lord Derby's grandfather saw what he took to be his own filly with no chance. He shut up his glasses as he exclaimed: "I'm beat to the devil." With his son he immediately drove back to London under the impression, of course, that he had seen his filly hopelessly routed. Actually he never made the marvellous discovery that his own filly had won the Oaks until someone congratulated him that same evening in the House of Lords. When all is said and done it is difficult to believe such a thing possible, except in fiction. Which is still another form of illustrating the glorious uncertainty of the Turf!

A few summers ago Lord Derby gave himself a holiday when he accepted the invitation of Mr. Joseph Widener and other leaders of racing in the United States to witness the race for the Kentucky Derby. Some may have another word for the strain imposed on one who is an honoured guest of lavish hospitality. Lord Derby endured it nobly and survived to make private as well as public confession of the wonderful reception given to him whether at Kentucky or at Belmont Park, where a special day's racing was organised in his honour. He was charmed with the racing at both places as he was almost overwhelmed with kindness and hospitality.

And while I am on family interests in the breeding and racing of the thoroughbred who could be more devoted to the subject than Lord Derby's heir, Lord Stanley? Really I could not name anyone. When he came home on leave from France in 1915—he was serving with the Guards—his father made him a present of a racehorse. It was one named Young Pegasus, who was good enough to win for Lord Stanley the first race in which he carried his colours. Another race he won was the Cambridgeshire Hunt Plate, which, with racing restricted to Newmarket, was the substituted race for the abandoned Royal Hunt Cup at Ascot. Long may it be before the Lord Stanley of to-day will be called upon to maintain the eminence of the House of Stanley in breeding and racing. When the day does come we are assured that the splendid traditions of generations of his forbears will be splendidly



HYPERION (T. WESTON UP), WINNER OF THE CHESTER VASE, DERBY, ST. LEGER, AND PRINCE  
OF WALES'S STAKES (ASCOT), WITH HIS TRAINER, THE HON. GEORGE LAMBTON



upheld to the utmost of his means and certainly stimulated by most exceptional enthusiasms.

Englishmen and Colonials the world over know of Lord Derby, and in all my travels I have never heard his name mentioned, whenever the mention of a Hyperion has cropped up, without admiration and respect for what he has done not only in racing and breeding, but in devoted service to his fellow-countrymen. This I have found to be so in the cities and plains of India, among the estates and plantations of Ceylon, in South Africa, on a tropical island, in South American cities, and in many a smoke-room on ocean-going liners.

This great friend of France who has done so much for the *entente* was our most popular Ambassador for years past. He was made much of when received by Mr. Joseph Widener and other leaders of breeding and racing in the United States. A P. and O. captain, on whose ship he has travelled from India, told me of his charm and utter absence of side and snobbishness. He has taken a big part in recent years in French racing and breeding, having first for partner an American, Mr. Ogden Mills, and then, after his death, his daughter, the Countess of Granard. But, however great his attachment to his thoroughbreds, he never allowed it to lessen his deep sense of duty in public affairs. More and more has it limited his opportunities for visiting our racecourses or even his residence at Newmarket, where are the horses in training and the breeding stock. I think of his great rallying stimulus to the country in the early days of the War when the hundreds of thousands attested under what was known as the Derby Scheme, of the critical period, too, when he was Secretary of State for War.

When those days were darkest and most critical he did not oppose the carrying on of some limited racing at Newmarket so that the complete stoppage for an indefinite time might not precipitate grave dangers for the future of the industry and the sport. The nucleus of his stable might be maintained, he said, and the horses raced so long as men fit for service were not being detained. His attitude was vastly important. It was an example which helped to save racing from those who would have closed it down altogether. When, later, the days were even more critical and a demand for complete stoppage was being renewed, I have no doubt that example inspired Lord Curzon in the House of Lords on May 24th, 1917, to

say: "That we possess in this wonderful stock—upon which foreign countries are always indenting, and which was really the foundation of the well-bred horse of the world—a national asset of almost incalculable value is undoubted."

So, in the light of the example of patriots like Lord Derby and others, we had racing finally saved, when, inspired by the Quartermaster-General of the Forces (General Sir John Cowans) and his Director of Remounts (Major-General Sir William Birkbeck), the Army Council persuaded the War Cabinet to sanction the limited amount of wartime racing at Newmarket. I have some recollection of the nature of the Memorandum of Racing which was approved by the Army Council and forwarded to the War Cabinet. It pointed out that ninety per cent of Army horses are of riding and light draught type, and that in the former the thoroughbred predominates, while in the production of the latter it played an important type. Then the Memorandum proceeded:

"The maintenance of the thoroughbred breeding industry is, therefore, vital to the efficiency for war of His Majesty's Land Forces.

"Racing is essential to the prosperity of the thoroughbred breeding industry in that it maintains and provides by competitive tests the value of the stallions.

"The training of racehorses for these tests is expensive; without racing there would be no training, and the majority of the colts, which are to be developed into the sires of the future, both of thoroughbred and half-bred stock, would be castrated, for they cannot be turned away to grass as can geldings and fillies. Even those colts, which owing to their exceptional breeding might be retained as stallions, would remain untested, and their value would not be proved. . . . It is, therefore, urged with the utmost seriousness that the very foundation of all excellence in horse-breeding, i.e. the thoroughbred breeding industry, should not be interfered with as long as it is possible to maintain it.

"There is no desire to urge the resumption of racing under National Hunt Rules, which they understand is largely confined to geldings and mares, nor do they ask for more racing under Jockey Club Rules than is sufficient to keep the industry of thoroughbred breeding alive."

In my own humble capacity as Staff-Captain to the Director

of Remounts, when that Memorandum was drafted, I had special reason for knowing that General Cowans and his D.R. really saved racing at that time, though I am also sure that the War Cabinet could not fail to have been impressed by the example set by Lord Derby and the patriotism shown by and assurances received from that very able Senior Steward of the Jockey Club, the late Lord Jersey.

One envies him his ability to build up a witty speech on a speech which has just preceded his and was meant as a leg-pull. I remember a dinner at the Savoy when the Derby Club of a hundred members was given birth to, and the Right Hon. Jim Thomas, who was in the chair, had many leg-pulling references to "my friend Derby." How perfectly Lord Derby dealt with him!

We may have noticed a slightly more pronounced strain imposed on the buttons of his morning coat, at any rate between the two Derby triumphs in his name, Sansovino in 1924 and Hyperion nine years later. Nine years is a long time in the life of one who feels it necessary regularly to go through an annual slimming cure. He was wet but very happy on that sloppy and muddy afternoon when Sansovino came in a very easy winner. He was wet with perspiration after Hyperion's St. Leger which made him exclaim: "This is the sort of slimming which I really like. I can put up with any amount of it."

This chapter seems a suitable place for mention of some of the notable horses I have seen win in the black jacket and white cap colours. There was Swynford, who, like Stedfast, was rather before my time. He won the St. Leger in 1910, beating the Derby winner of that year, Lemberg. His trainer has written of him as "a great horse." I never set eyes on him until he had been at the stud a few years, and then I could understand the great drive and power he was said to have put into his races. Yet Hurry On is the most massive and powerful horse I have ever seen that was also first class both on the racecourse and at the stud. Swynford brought much revenue on the right side of the balance sheet of Lord Derby's stud accounts. He was a big stake winner, but he was a far bigger winner as the most sought after stallion of his day.

Stedfast won over £30,000 in stakes. They said he must have won the Derby of 1911 had he not been left many lengths. I do not know about that. My eyes that day were on Sunstar



who did win. I have never seen a Derby won by a horse that is left many lengths. You cannot as a rule give away distance at Epsom, though Blenheim did to an extent. Therefore no one is justified in waving aside the possibility that Sunstar might have been well served by the bad luck of the other one. After all, Stedfast did proceed to prove that he was an exceptionally good horse. He was the first of Lord Derby's three seconds for the race before Sansovino paralysed his field in the heavy going of 1924. The other two were Archaic and Pharos. Spion Kop accounted for the one on a very hot and dusty day in 1920, Papyrus for the other.

I think, perhaps, Pharos was the best of the three. He must have been a stout fellow, too, because just about that time he was given a big dose of racing and he survived it. Moreover, he has been a marked stud success, for what he could not quite do himself at Epsom his son Cameronian could achieve, while another by him, Firdaussi, was a most worthy winner of the St. Leger in quite a good year. Sansovino, I thought, never got over the two calls made on him at Ascot. I do not presume to criticise a Stable policy. I have far too much respect for Mr. Lambton, but no matter what the horse may be, whether he be a horse of the stoutest constitution, it is asking a lot of one to follow up the strain of a Derby preparation, and the effort which winning imposes, with more than one call in four days at Ascot only a month later. I believe Lord Derby and Mr. Walter Alston, who for many years managed his stud, thought Sansovino would be an outstanding success as a sire. He has not been quite that, not yet.

Of Derbys since the War specially easy winners were Captain Cuttle, Sansovino, Manna, Coronach and Hyperion, and the easiest of them all was Hyperion. I do not think I shall ever see an easier winner, because his supremacy was never in doubt for a moment. It was as if he had appeared a fresh horse, jumping up in front of them at the foot of Tattenham Corner to come right away after the manner of a brilliant sprinter. When Sansovino was half-way up the straight in his year, and was going better than any other, I turned to Lord Derby, who was standing among a few Jockey Club members just below me, and said: "You really will win this time, Lord Derby." "Oh, don't say that yet," he murmured



FROM LORD DERBY'S CHRISTMAS CARD FOR 1933  
Leading in Hyperion after winning the Derby of 1933.



protestingly in his excitement, "he's not past the post yet, you know."

Yet Lord Derby in his heart knew he had won his first Derby at that moment, only he would not allow himself to admit it in case a miracle should happen. A horse has been known to fall when leading with little more to go and all others whacked. Or one has seen a horse with the race apparently won that has stopped to a walk. Why, one can never understand. The imminence of victory seems to be too much for some horses. They are the sort best ridden by the Harry Wraggs and the Joe Childs. Now, in the case of Hyperion, Lord Derby could never have had an uneasy moment. His face had wreathed itself once more in the jolly laugh of victory. The judge said Hyperion had won by five lengths. Talking to him later, I think he realised he had under-estimated the margin, but by that time the official estimate had gone forth. Really it does not matter except to posterity. The distance of five lengths will not convey to them the extraordinary ease and fluency of the win.

Seeing him standing in the unsaddling enclosure with the saddle removed, and fully stripped except for his bridle, with no sort of bandage or boot on his legs, he did, indeed, look a picture of symmetry and perfection, a model of the horse which is below what is called the horse of average size. That I take to be 16 hands, or, maybe, slightly under. On the day he won the Derby he could only have been the merest shade over 15.1. When he won the St. Leger about three months later he was exactly 15.1 $\frac{1}{2}$ . Just before the end of his three-year-old days, after being turned out loose in a paddock for several hours a day and being taken up again at night, he was measured at 15.2. His girth was 69 inches and 71 inches at the withers. He had 8 inches of bone below the knee.

It is interesting to compare those measurements with the filly, Brown Betty, who the same year won the One Thousand Guineas. They were taken in September, and it should be borne in mind that the filly was generally admired and was looked upon as being of average size. She did, indeed, stand 16 hands. Her girth was 69 inches, and she also had 8 inches of bone below the knee. Hyperion, therefore, was 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches shorter in stature but had precisely the same measurements in other respects.

The easiest Derby winner in my time was a remarkable fellow. He really did not resemble either his sire, Gainsborough, or his dam, Selene, except that the mare was undersized though a rare sort and a fine winner. Gainsborough himself rather suggested the hunter type of blood horse and one could so often see his type imprinted on his stock. He and Selene were bays. Hyperion was a glorious chestnut. Gainsborough's dam, Rosedrop, was a chestnut and from her the colour doubtless comes. Hyperion had distinguishing white markings which were wrongly described as "stockings." They were nothing of the sort. The possession of four white stockings may have often dismayed the prospective buyer who has accepted the warning in verse never to buy the horse with four white legs. Hyperion had white no higher than his hind fetlocks. The white in front was little higher than the pasterns. There have been comparatively recent Derby winners with more white about them than there is about Hyperion. Spion Kop, for instance, Felstead for another; while one might also quote Captain Cuttle, Coronach, and Call Boy.

Hyperion has the truest action in the world. It seems to gain for him the maximum result with the minimum effort. His length of stride is at least equal to, or more than, that of the average racehorse. Then, being thus equipped, the motive power was the will to race and give of his best. Courage and big-heartedness it is called. Steady nerves I might also call it. What a contrast he was on Derby day to another horse of Lord Derby's that started at a much shorter price for the Derby but became a nervous wreck through having to contend with an appalling press of folk and the din on the course after emerging from the paddock. Fairway, when given fair play, as on later occasions, showed that his nerves did not fail him. Felstead won that Derby and they never met again because that was the end of Felstead's racing career. But Fairway went on to win for Lord Derby at Ascot, the Eclipse Stakes, and the St. Leger, while he never fell from grace in any serious way as a four-year-old. It is no wonder, therefore, that he is generally accepted as the best horse of his year.

It may be well worth while drawing on a few more recollections of the easiest Derby winner. He won at Ascot as a two-year-old. He did not run for the Middle Park Stakes for

which Manitoba was disqualified in favour of the Aga Khan's Felicitation. But a fortnight later, quite by chance as it were, he was called on for duty for the Dewhurst Stakes at Newmarket for which, by the way, Felicitation was inevitably favourite. Now Lord Derby's runner for this race was to have been Thrapston, because he had been tried to be a number of lengths better than Hyperion while the other one was receiving an important allowance through never having won a race. The day before running Thrapston was found to have developed a temperature. Running him, of course, was out of the question, and then it was that Lord Derby agreed to let Hyperion deputise though the dapper chestnut colt had not really been tuned up. He ran in very deep ground, worse going I have seldom seen at Newmarket, and he won with the greatest ease by several lengths.

I only once saw Mr. Lambton look quite as surprised after a race. It was when Colorado had disposed of Coronach, the hot 5 to 4 favourite, by five lengths for the Two Thousand Guineas seven years before. Colorado had gone particularly badly in a gallop through displaying that tendency to choke or swallow his tongue. Coronach, by the way, got his own back when the Derby came along, but it was Colorado again that made Coronach look as if he had the affliction when he trounced him, first for the Princess of Wales Stakes and then for the Eclipse Stakes.

It was because Hyperion had shown such appreciation of soft ground that one wondered how he would be suited by the hard state of the course on Derby day. We might have wondered still more when he came to race on the very hard ground at Doncaster for the St. Leger had it not been for vivid Epsom memories. He was almost as impressive a winner of the St. Leger, and because he did there what has so seldom happened, that is, for a horse to make practically the whole of the running and win, one could no longer be left in any sort of doubt that here was one right out of the ordinary.

It had been a crowded year for Lord Derby. The Derby and the St. Leger won again and with the same horse. Down-right hard work as a member of the India Select Committee on the famous White Paper. The break up of a forty-year-old association in the parting with the Hon. George Lambton.

## CHAPTER XI

### TWO OUTSTANDING STUDENTS OF BREEDING : LORD WAVERTREE AND H.H. THE AGA KHAN

Lord Wavertree denies the "Royal Road" to success—A cocksure outlook born of success—Mentor of the Aga Khan—Application of the horoscope—His gift to the Nation—Defence and glorification of the National Stud—Why he leased Minoru to King Edward VII—The Aga Khan thirty years ago—A man of great vision, ambition and intelligence—His gifts as applied to breeding and racing.

**I** NAME His Highness the Aga Khan and the late Lord Wavertree as the two most remarkable students in my time of the breed of the racehorse. I do not claim for them absolute leadership in breeding. In the case of Lord Wavertree it almost amounted to fanaticism. But then, his studies carried him beyond inferences to be drawn from an intimate knowledge of breeding history. He drew on other sources for his inspirations. For instance, I have a letter from him dated 1908, in which he says:

"There is no royal road to success in breeding, either by the aid of Astrology, Botany, or Physiology, but these all have their uses if applied in an intelligent manner. Nature cannot be governed by magic, but is ruled by common sense, when by thought, study, and practical knowledge, men seek its development in the direction they require. So we find at this period of the history of the world England maintaining her supremacy in all pure bred stock, whether horses, pigs, cattle, dogs or birds.

"Every breeder has his methods, and most of those who have been successful have kept their knowledge to themselves. But it is within the means of all who desire to extend their knowledge to master the theories of Weinberger, Lafcadio Hearn, Andrew Lang, Bruce Lowe, Vuillier, with the intricacies of Totemism, and last, but not least, but most important of all, Veidavolani, which latter I may inform you has nothing to do with Astrology."

That letter was written when Colonel Hall Walker, as he was then, was the owner of the Tully Stud, on the outskirts of The Curragh in Ireland. When the Government accepted all the animals on it, stallions, mares, yearlings, and foals, as his gift to the nation with the land at their own valuation, it became the National Stud. He had been meeting with striking success as a breeder-owner on the racecourse. His pride in achievement he never concealed. It amounted to vanity. There was nothing he would not accomplish. He had discovered the secrets leading to the royal road to success notwithstanding what he wrote in the first sentence of the letter quoted above.

One felt when talking with him, at least he did the talking, that he was trying to impress you, that is, if he thought you were worth talking to by his oracular self. But first he had to create the right atmosphere, which meant that he must give you an inferiority complex on matters relating to breeding. Then he would tell you how easy it all was if only you would listen to him and accept his teachings. I did listen and learned much, but always one felt that he was glorifying his own achievements and pitying all others who were striving in a maze of their own making to find the same goal.

I used to feel rather flattered when he would join me on the rails of a parade ring in the paddock. Maybe it was to criticise with his airy way of supreme finality some comment on a horse's breeding or a description of a horse with which he did not agree. Or he would take most critical notice of the horses as they were walking round, remarking that one was lame in some obscure place, another was the son of an impossible sire, while another was palpably unfit. It was not his way to criticise by half-measures. He was confident to the point of being cocksure; he was emphatic to the point of reaching the fringe of dogma.

My experience of the inhabitants of the racing world, I mean those who give a little thought to the horse and his breeding, is that anything in the nature of dogma does not go down well. It is indigestible at best of times. So while I immensely admired his successes, and respected his knowledge of the make and shape and breeding of the racehorse, I am bound to say that he did not bring about any upheaval in accepted precepts of breeding. I often regret that so far as I know he never gave his secrets to us in book form before he



died. Glance again at the letter from which I have quoted, all vagueness and unsatisfying. Yet I repeat the respect I have for his memory when I think of the deep impression he made on the Aga Khan and how we owe it to Lord Wavertree that His Highness came into breeding and racing in England with an enthusiasm which has carried him right to the top.

In the midst of his duties at the Disarmament Conference at Geneva the Aga Khan found time to write to me soon after Lord Wavertree's death. His letter is dated February 4th, 1933, and this is what he said:

MY DEAR GALTREY,

It was entirely due to Lord Wavertree, and my personal friendship for him, that I started to race on the English Turf. I would probably never have been known as an owner West of Suez had he not, during and after my visit to Tully in 1904, urged me to take up racing in England. He undoubtedly gave me much good advice, and up to the last I never took an important decision without asking his opinion.

Great as have been my successes on the Turf—for during the ten years I have been racing I have four times headed the list of winning owners, almost a record in its way—had I absolutely listened to the advice he gave me those successes would have been infinitely greater. Bygones are bygones, but it just shows that those who “pooh-pooh” science, knowledge, and study in connection with racing do not know what they are talking about.

Lord Wavertree's own successes as a breeder were enormous, and he spent very little money. He always told me that had the amount I invested in horses been spent according to his views there would have been no limit to the successes I would have had. Looking back now I see that this was not mere optimism on his part, but it would have been proved to be true in practice year by year.

Yours sincerely,

AGA KHAN.

P.S.—Another curious thing that he foretold in October before the King's illness: he most distinctly and clearly foretold that His Majesty the King would soon be very ill and

then recover and resume his normal life and duties. That same winter the King was seriously ill and got over it. Of course Lord Wavertree went by the King's horoscope which he had worked up.

That letter is much more illuminating. It proves that he found the Aga Khan the sort of sympathetic listener he would talk to at great length with never the shadow of doubt that what he had to say represented wisdom and the fruits of his gleanings from the sciences. His inferences were incontrovertible. Then it was typical of his cocksureness that he should have assured the Aga Khan of the unlimited successes which would have been his had the money spent on bloodstock been invested according to his views. The Aga Khan accepts that view to-day, which does, indeed, pay a marvellous tribute to his old friend.

I always knew Lord Wavertree was an ardent believer in Astrology and that, via the medium of horoscopes, it could be applied to the mating and racing of racehorses. If the horoscope was not favourable his interest drooped. My knowledge of the subject is far too superficial to say more than that if his approval of a mating had a favourable reaction to the horoscope, then he would be satisfied. Even so I imagine there would be checks to the theory. For instance, he sold Prince Palatine as a yearling for only £2000. It was a private deal, the purchaser being Mr. Pilkington, for whom the beautifully bred son of Persimmon and Lady Lightfoot (a daughter of Isinglass) won the St. Leger and two Ascot Gold Cups. When the breeder of this big winner was asked much later why he had not raced Prince Palatine, but had preferred to sell him, he is understood to have replied that he had not been satisfied with what the colt's horoscope had told him at the time of birth.

He missed having this classic and Cup winner. He missed also getting the £40,000 which was paid for the horse by Mr. J. B. Joel on the completion of his racing career. On the other hand, Lord Wavertree might have said that he could have prophesied the horse's comparative failure as a stallion. He had no use for failures though he might hang on to a horse which other people were beginning to crab.

I am reminded of a long letter received from him late in

1918. It shows a certain impatience of even the mildest criticism of anything of which he had at one time or another approved or made himself responsible for. I should make it clear that in the early part of the War period he had made his offer of the Tully Stud and the Russley training establishment in Wiltshire to the Government. The Board of Agriculture, after some hesitation, accepted the gift of livestock, and, as is well known, they have ever since maintained the property in Ireland as the National Stud. They may not do so indefinitely. However, the point is that in an article written by me under a *nom de plume* I happened to make the observation: "If a stud in Ireland (the National Stud) is to compete with privately controlled establishments it will have to bring its stock-in-trade up-to-date by the investment of capital in the highest class of stallions and mares."

Then again: "The National Stud has White Eagle, Royal Realm, and Great Sport, and though each has distinct possibilities they are not in the same class as sires as Polymelus, Sunstar, Tracery, The Tetrarch, Gay Crusader, and Roi Herode." White Eagle, Royal Realm, and Great Sport had been in the gift to the nation. The Director of the Stud had to make use of their services as sires of yearlings sent up without reserve to public auction.

It was more than enough to bring down the wrath of the donor. His rebuke took the form of a lecture addressed to the pen-name of the writer. He could not have been aware at the time of my identity. He reminded me that my "unfair and unfortunate remarks" might have spoiled the sale of the yearlings, and that I must bear in mind that the National Stud was as much my property as anyone else's. Having then assured me that he regarded me as a fair critic, because I appeared to be well enough up in the subject, he added: "For that reason I will endeavour to enlighten you."

Even at this distance of time I believe it will be of interest to quote some of what followed in his very long letter:

"Polymelus as a sire," he wrote, "was not appreciated until his stock had won. This was a horse I was anxious to buy myself. My judgment proved to be sound, but I also think as highly of Great Sport, beaten two heads for the Derby. I think he won it, and I know that he ought to have won it. He nearly fell over the fallen horse and the jockey lost his whip.

Being a lazy horse his jockey could not squeeze him up in time to win.

"White Eagle can get winners of the highest class and he doesn't seem to get any losers. Royal Realm's stock are so wonderful in appearance that it seems impossible for him to be a failure. Sunstar was a horse that won the Derby on three legs. I had the greatest regard for this horse. But unsoundness begets unsoundness, and when a stallion has had over forty mares a season I drop him out at once as all sensible men would. The Tetrarch was another unsound horse, but he is sure to get one or two smashers. Gay Crusader has yet to prove himself. Few would doubt his possibilities, but his stock are not yet in competition so why include him? Roi Herode will have to show us another horse or two to establish him to fame. The one horse made him and gave him an exceptional chance with several years full subscriptions. We must remember that The Tetrarch's dam was unsound.

"Owing to all the mares I sent up for sale having been accepted by the Government at the eleventh hour, and having to return to Ireland again in the depth of winter, they were all on the sick list and it was impossible to send them away to other stallions. They had, therefore, to be mated with the home stallions irrespective of whether they were suited or not.

"Breeders are tempted to use their own stallions too freely. Young stallions have to be made. Patronage is the only method. Tempting small fees is one way. Using one's own mares is another. Press eulogy, thoughtfully and generously given, is of great value. The National Stud is the first institution of its kind in the world and an example to every other stud. The land is of great range—1000 acres divided into 100 paddocks. Labour is not stinted. Every mare sent to visit the stud is all the better for her three months there. The wonderful sweet fresh grass enables the mare to produce the finest milk which is the essence of life to the sucking foal produced there and at her foot. Think what that means and then remember that in eighteen years since its foundation it has produced the winners of every race of importance in England and Ireland, winners of something like £250,000 in stakes to be on the safe side.

"Think of the advantage to any owner sending up his mare

to any stallion located there. That alone is a great asset. Now look round and ask yourself if you are sending a mare to any other stallion where you will be even safe in this respect. What stud has the same number of men employed to lead the mares? What stud has the grass for the mare and foal? Where is the stud that has even decent accommodation? And how many stallions are there limited to thirty nominations as I personally laid it down were enough for any horse if the last-covered mares were to have as good a chance as the first? If you were to visit the Stud and then visit every other Stud of importance you would be able to compare notes. You would see at once what a handicap, what a risk it is, to send mares to many of these popular and high-priced stallions. And yet it has to be done. You would be rendering an infinite service to the industry of thoroughbred breeding if you were to take up this subject and sweep out the evils that exist.

"It was my desire and expressed wish that Russley Park should have been utilised at once as a depot for Government stallions for light horse breeding. When they purchased this property from me at their own valuation I handed over to them as a gift all the tack, provender, and effects to enable them to carry on at once and gave them several stallions to go on with, which they sold. I pointed out that instead of paying thirty or forty thousand pounds a year giving King's Premiums they could for such an amount buy stallions during the War to fill all the boxes; that they could be stabled there, exercised, and distributed during the season to the different allocated centres, returning to Russley at the end of each season. Look at the saving to the State in this and imagine what valuable stallions would have been saved to the country. After the War the income from the National Stud, if the stallions are well patronised and the young mares get to be proved, will be sufficient to pay for the Russley Stallion Depot and be self-supporting as a whole.

"One of my principal reasons for making this gift was that by the Government becoming interested in the industry they would be more easily influenced in seeing the necessity of racing being continued in the interests of light horse breeding for the country. And I was able in my private capacity, as a Member of Parliament in touch with these matters, to use a certain amount of persuasion which had the desired result.

In the same way my reason for leasing my colts to H.M. King Edward was the fear that I possessed from inside knowledge that his own colts, having failed, he was discontented with racing and breeding and not likely to take the same personal interest in the Turf as before. He won the Two Thousand Guineas and Derby with one of them, Minoru, and no King ever had a greater triumph than he had on Derby day. I was the first man and only man he shook hands with on his way down to lead in the winner.

"I don't think the Turf has suffered very much for the connection I have had with it."

The letter is characteristic of the man who religiously practised what he preached. His successes in the highest plane of breeding and racing are the monument to his memory. He praised Polymelus, but only so that he could exalt his own horse Great Sport. Really there was no comparison between them. He was right in prophesying that The Tetrarch was sure to get one or two smashers. Three St. Leger winners by him were to come after that letter had been written. By supplying a Derby winner to run in King Edward's name and colours he thinks he restored his Majesty's drooping interest in the Turf. King Edward did not long survive that memorable day at Epsom in 1909. His dream as to what the Government should do with his old Russley property never came true. It never will. Rather has it been the case for years that it has been more of an embarrassment than a national asset. He was a strange mixture. For, blended in him were true love and understanding of the horse, an ardent belief in himself, impatience with many, amounting to contempt at times, a distinct trend to science and its teachings as in their application to sex and reproduction, while ever he would respond with ardour when asked for advice or for what he would do. Like all in whom there is vanity the flattery pleased him.

He had several trainers in my time, with most of whom he fell out. He was not the sort of owner who sought only to see his name in print (in the right places) at the price of the monthly training bills and the liabilities contracted with the stakeholders. Each horse had to be specialised in; his work or feeding meticulously adjusted. If one of his horses broke down he did not always blame the horse. There must have been another reason. He did not breed unsound horses!

Rarely did his jockeys give him entire satisfaction, sometimes even when they won. It was not enough when they won if they had not been ridden strictly to his orders. The trainer to stay with him longest of all, in fact right up to the time of his death, was Mr. "Jock" Fergusson. They were more than owner and trainer. They were the best of friends.

It was news to me when the Aga Khan made the statement in the letter quoted in this chapter that he owed his introduction to racing and breeding in England to Lord Wavertree. Now one can see the connection. It was on the fine grass-land adjoining the National Stud in Ireland that the Aga Khan established his own stud on high-class lines. He chose as its first manager Sir Henry Greer, who since it had been "nationalised" had acted as Director of the National Stud. Sir Henry relinquished both positions at the end of 1933. The Aga Khan's mares and their youthful progeny should be nourished on the "wonderful sweet fresh grass."

It was my privilege first to know his Highness in the early years of this century when India was more his home than Europe is to-day. He was much in Bombay and Poona and his racehorses were trained for him by his cousin, Aga Shamsuddin Shah, whom every *sahib* greatly liked. He spoke English perfectly and was, in fact, a delightful man. In those days they raced more "waler" horses from Australia than English horses, of which there were not many, though a few years before one named Up Guards, who had won a Chester Cup, secured the Viceroy's Cup at Calcutta for a Maharajah of Jodhpur. The Aga Khan had a waler, a big, plain, ugly-looking gelding named Beadsman, that was regularly winning, and a top-notch among Arab ponies named Oriental.

Then came a very long gap until, two or three years after the War, we saw the Hon. George Lambton paying big prices for yearlings at Doncaster and elsewhere, and it became known that he was spending the Aga Khan's money, who was going to make a big splash on the English Turf and would have his horses trained by Dick Dawson at Whatcombe. He began on princely lines. It is his way. We may say that such a way is so very easy when, behind the impulse, there is the very big purse with apparently no bottom to it. You have to look beyond that fully to understand the way the Aga Khan regards things. It is not alone a matter of the possession of

the necessary riches. The outlook, too, and the vision must be big and illuminating. The Aga Khan came into racing not alone to win races, but to breed the winners of our big races, and show that such could be done by close study and much deep thinking after the foundations had been intelligently and securely laid. There was ambition behind what might have appeared to some as merely vulgar advertisement and an easy means of absorbing much money.

The Aga Khan is a man of very great ability, of exceptional personality, and possessed of very special gifts as linguist and scholar. All those attributes he has used to serve England and the Empire. I am, however, more concerned with what he has done, and is doing, for breeding and racing in this country. He has ever shown shrewdness in employing the best available brains to further his interests, in his stud manager, in his trainer, and in the early days in the one whose judgment of conformation in the yearling he relied on. But he is a rapid learner, and the seeds of learning acquired from Lord Waver-tree and other accepted authorities have now deep roots. He has a highly-developed mind of his own. If there be profit from successes there is also the great measure of achievement and the pleasure it brings.

We saw him exalted, when, a proud and happy man, he led in his first Derby winner, Blenheim, but I fancy his pride was greater when with Firdaussi he won the St. Leger, while three others in his ownership were second, fourth and fifth. The second, Dastur, was at a shorter price in the betting than the winner, just as Blenheim was at longer odds for his Derby than the stable companion, Rustom Pasha. Firdaussi won that St. Leger by a neck. His owner was within a few yards of me. For a few moments he was in some doubt as to which of his two had won. Dastur or Firdaussi? "It's Firdaussi," I shouted across to him.

"Splendid," he said in a raised voice of sheer joy. "That comes of managing my own horses. I insisted on running him because I thought he had a great chance." And away he strode to lead in this classic winner. We thought the appointment would be kept with Dastur. Michael Beary must have been of the same opinion, when, having first choice of mounts, he selected Dastur.

Now Blenheim had been bought by him as a yearling. But



he was the breeder of Firdaussi. In the one victory, though it had been the Derby, there was an alloy; the other was the real, complete, and satisfying thing. So was that of Felicitation, his Gold Cup winner of 1934. The Gold Cup won by a horse of his own breeding only five or six years after beginning to race horses of his own breeding!

We were travelling to York for the dinner of the Gimcrack Club which was celebrating the Gimcrack Stakes success of his filly Mrs. Rustom, and the conversation was not of Indian politics and affairs or of Disarmament, but of breeding matters. "It's a marvellously fascinating subject. One can never stop learning," he remarked.

I asked him whether he thought a deep knowledge of it could be acquired by anyone from study and introspection. "Yes, I think so," was his reply. Then, rapidly, he qualified himself. "No, perhaps not. I think you must have a flair for it."

If he had been charged with the responsibility of establishing the Totalisator in England it would have been on different lines. He could not, indeed, have succeeded, fettered as the institution has been by the Act of Parliament which defined the narrow limits of the powers. His vision would have foreseen the very serious difficulties which actually have been encountered and still prevail. He would have banished the bookmaker from the racecourse so that Totalisator betting could have had the monopoly. He would have sought powers for establishing Totalisator receiving offices throughout the country, the deposits in which would have to be transmitted to the racecourse Tote, thereby making "away" betting contribute to the maintenance and improvement of racing and breeding. He would have limited the deduction from pools to about six per cent. He would have seen betting bring dazzling prosperity to the sport and the industry, modern stands and enclosures on the racecourses, some centralisation of racing, a great cheapening of race-going, a new racing heaven in fact. He would have had nothing to do with restrictions which can only strangle and induce atrophy. I may be wrong in my conception of what I think of one who has realism as well as vision. I may also be right.

## CHAPTER XII

### FOUR SKETCHES: LORD LONSDALE; MR. H. E. MORRISS; LORD GLANELY; SIR ABE BAILEY

Lord Lonsdale at Epsom and Doncaster—The people's hero—Favoured ally of the National Stud—Mr. Harry Morriss of Shanghai—An inspired cable to Beckhampton in 1923—What racing cost Lord Beaverbrook—Lord Glanely, best of buyers, worst of sellers—His post-war influence—Sir Abe Bailey as breeder and owner—Undaunted and sanguine—Tishy—A memory of Muizenberg.

ONE need never hesitate in naming Lord Lonsdale as the best known and most picturesque figure on certain of our racecourses. His name may not be so often in print, as, say, Gordon Richards, and it may not be as high in the winning owners' list as the Aga Khan's, but I still say you need have no doubts. They know him best as Epsom where the Derby is run in very early June, and at Doncaster, where are the St. Leger horses, in September. They are the big show occasions for the people, not as at Ascot in a sartorial sense, but just a people's day for the people. I have known them to cheer him on occasions. He beams his pleasure. Fortunately, for the touch of romance they have given him, he has gone through a fairly long life without being forbidden on medical grounds to smoke. Hence the long, long trail of long cigars, every day, and all day, and the million fragrant puffs into the passing breeze. Long ago they became a most essential item in the make-up of this popular people's personality.

At Epsom and Ascot you see him in the old-fashioned frock coat, not one of your beautifully stream-lined morning coats, and always a black topper, never a grey one. The waistcoat may be of varying hue though it can be but seldom one fails to pick out some touch, however slight, according to the occasions, of his favourite canary yellow. The shoes are made for comfort rather than shop window effect. The tie is usually white to match the innocence of the virginal gardenia in his button-

hole. At places less dressy where the mode is not so *de riguer* it becomes the insignia of classic cricket.

For years he has been a Steward of Epsom and Doncaster meetings and of other places, too, of course, and he has been a senior Steward of the Jockey Club, which means that he had three years of the work devolving on the good men and true who undertake this voluntary work. Perhaps it is scarcely necessary to say that he had a very serious conception of what such duties were. We lookers-on could not fail to know that, too.

At Epsom he surveys the racing from that little landmark of a stand just a few yards beyond the winning post. It is now known as the Lonsdale Stand. The people packing round it can take a lengthy survey of him, see him coming and going as he crosses to the Stands side to be there in case any matters call for adjustment and settlement. He carries his race card enclosed in a leather case in his left hand. The arm is crooked at the elbow so as to allow of the hook-handled walking stick to hang. It is rarely used for any other purpose. The right hand is left free for employment with the latest lighted long cigar. It has been lighted with an old-fashioned fusee.

Police, mounted and on foot, enjoy saluting him and receiving his genial rejoinder: "And good morning to you!" The *petite bourgeoisie* want to let him know that they are his friends and admirers. "There 'e goes," you will hear from voices near the rails as if they were viewing a fine old dog-fox breaking cover. How could he be anything else but conscious that he has their approbation and that they are glad to see him on another Derby Day exactly as before and apparently untouched by the years?

At Doncaster he turns out with the earliest in the morning, cigar, of course, and all, and he takes up a position just about where the start takes place for the St. Leger. The sleepers-out and the early birds stand and gaze at, what I might describe with no disrespect, this monument to authority, a policing sort of authority maybe. He is there to see that the horses out for early-morning exercise are not worked where they are not wanted. He is joined by Lord Harewood, also an institution as a Steward of Doncaster St. Leger meetings. They see well-known horses come and go. They can form their own opinions of the fitness of the St. Leger favourite. The yellow motor car



AT THE FOOT OF TATTENHAM CORNER WHEN MAKING THE TURN INTO THE STRAIGHT FOR  
THE DERBY OF 1934

Colombo (marked X) is seen in a pocket. He is third behind Tiberius and Medieval Knight, the three being in line next the rails. Windsor Lad, the winner, is in the centre and just about to take up the running from Tiberius. Easton, who finished third, is near the outside, white with conspicuous black hoop.



is gazed at long and earnestly. They have waited for his arrival and they stay to see the last of him as their Admirable Crichton goes off to breakfast.

Lord Lonsdale's racing as an owner has not cost him much. Rather may it have shown him a profit. For one thing he never bets as much as a shilling. His position has been unusual, and, to many, an enviable one. Year after year since the War he has been able to lease one or two, or three yearlings out of the annual crop at the National Stud. Naturally, of course, they would not be the worst of the crop, because he is a very good judge, and so is Sir Henry Greer, his friend, who up till recently directed the policy of our National Stud. You know also they must be thought highly of, because, if they do well on the racecourse, they are wanted back at the stud to strengthen the establishment in mares, or, maybe, fill the place of a worthy sire. The selected ones have gone into the Beckhampton stable, whose trainer, Fred Darling, is so much esteemed by the lessee, though it was from Alfred Sadler's stable in 1922 that the National Stud-bred Royal Lancer came to win the St. Leger in Lord Lonsdale's colours.

I have heard it said that this "creaming" of the National Stud yearlings, prior to the time when they were due to come up for sale, has prejudiced such sale. "Why bid for them when we know they have been picked over?" "We would give big prices for what Sir Henry Greer and Lord Lonsdale regarded as the best, but they are not here." I mention these observations because it is necessary to be perfectly truthful in a commentary on what has passed. Such discrimination shown to one man, year after year, may or may not have prejudiced the sales.

Once there was an exception in which Lord Lonsdale did not take his usual part. Sir Henry Greer had what he regarded as a marvellous yearling, the best, I gathered, he had ever set eyes on. He had assumed managership of the Aga Khan's new Sheshoon Stud, which adjoined the National Stud, and so, of course, he was in touch with the Aga Khan. His Highness must have shared in his manager's enthusiasm; for he offered the enormous sum of twenty or twenty-one thousand pounds for the colt by Hurry On from Ecurie, with another colt thrown in. We were given to understand that the Ecurie colt represented something like seventeen thousand

of the total. Given the name of Ferridoon he was a ghastly failure, finishing up in France by being sold for the equivalent in francs of £13!

Sir Henry Greer may point to that private sale and hold that such a sum would never have been forthcoming at public auction. But you never can tell. Supposing Lord Glanely as well as the Aga Khan had fancied the alleged marvel. Sir Henry again might say that the Stud would never have had returned to them the sires Royal Lancer and Dilgence after they had won important races in Lord Lonsdale's colours. The one did little or no good; the other sired lots of winners, but was never in the first class. However, the lessor was not to know that. They might have been wonder horses as sires.

Time will show whether the National Stud will be maintained. I very much doubt it. It paid its way, and, indeed, showed substantial profits in the years when the yearling market boomed after the War. But the boom long since passed. There have been losses, and with no sires to earn fat fees how can its existence be justified with Government departments ever being called on to effect economies? But should it last there will be Myrobella to adorn it. For she must be the fastest thing that ever issued from it and then to return after the big sprinting things she did in the Lonsdale colours. Her performances over five and six furlongs were the most glittering I have seen on a racecourse for years. The boys in the Beckhampton stable used to call her "Lucy Glitters." Sir Henry Greer can point to her and say that she justifies his much-criticised leasing policy. Having her back, there will be keen competition to buy her progeny for some years to come. If she had not been held back from the sale ring there would not have gone into the revenue side of the balance sheet the stud's share of her winnings, while there would have had to be an outlay on a high-class mare or two to take the places of the old and the discarded. High-class mares are not easy to come by. When they are found they are very hard to buy.

There is an owner in the Beckhampton stable of whom we have not heard a deal since, in 1925, he had the great good fortune to lead in his Derby winner, Manna. I am thinking of Mr. Harry Morriss. We might, indeed, never have heard

of him at all but for Manna. Which reminds us of how on a chance resolve so very much can hang. He came to his resolve in Shanghai, in which strange and wonderful city of China he and his father before him had long been established in finance. I believe it is called bullion broking. He was a prominent owner of racing ponies. He was also a very successful amateur rider, a G. R. as they are known in the East.

The resolve was to send home a commission by cable to buy the outstanding yearling colt at Doncaster. That was in 1922 when prices really were prices. He asked Fred Darling to make the purchase. The trainer had already had a horse belonging to him in his stable. He selected and bought Manna, a bay colt by Phalaris from Waffles, and though the mare had no racing career to her name this son of hers made the big price of 6300 guineas.

There seems to have been some Celestial inspiration in that resolve mailed home from China. The fairy tale became a true tale. Manna was a very easy winner of the Derby following his win of the Two Thousand Guineas. Instantly he became a most valuable commercial proposition, for now he had opened out a stud career with many thousands of pounds in service fees absolutely guaranteed every year for some years. He became the case of a horse forcing its owner into new ventures. Mr. Morriss had now to form a stud farm in England, though he must continue to live for most of the year in the Far East. But his wife had enthusiam too, and the keenness to enter into management. And there was the Trans-Siberian Railway through Bolshevik Siberia and Russia to hasten the periodical journeys. It all happened like that. The Stud was duly built up around the horse as it were, and he himself was housed in a sumptuous roomy box (a bad word for it) with rubber walls so that any sudden fits of exuberance would not hurt his heels. There was introduced a visitors' book, which, by the way, I have signed more than once. He has been gazed at worshipfully by the Morriss family, critically by patron owners of mares, and, curiously, by those who found it hard, looking at his ample masculine proportions, to believe that such an aldermanic individual could actually have once been a lean and hard racehorse, capable of proving the champion of his day. That he has maintained his reputation is unquestioned. He may even enhance what he has achieved already.



Will the reader be interested, I wonder, in a description of Shanghai as sent to me in a letter by Mr. Morriss in 1926. You will gather that he is an admirer and a friend of the best of the Chinese.

"I must say," he wrote after his train journey across Siberia, "Shanghai impresses one, even after an absence of six months, of its expansion and growth and tremendous vitality, more and more each time. Of course, by rights during the last twenty years there should have grown up a dozen other Shanghais in the interior and on the coast whereby the present concentrated importance of this place would have been spread over. But what stood in the way was cupidity and corruption on the one hand and the knowledge that foreign good government and protection were available in the settlement on the other hand. Hence this place is the emporium of the East, very much overcrowded, and, incidentally, the object of covetous eyes. Time was, however, when it was a mud flat, and an unhealthy one too, set aside for foreigners to play about on, and this city is the result of their play.

"I cannot see that the Chinese are anti-foreign, and, least of all, anti-British. I think their conduct only takes that form because in opposing the foreigner at most they may not get all they want, but in opposing their own governing officials of the conservative type they would have their heads lopped off. The foreigner really supplies them a safety valve, and enables them to direct their energy where the resistance is least.

"The Cantonese, now striving for power, are supposed to be 'Red,' but when one reflects that for many years Cantonese have been and are compradors of the big foreign banks here and in other Treaty ports, are great bankers themselves, own and conduct big Selfridge-like Stores, and big tobacco companies, etc., etc., their status and outlook are scarce compatible with the word 'Red' in the generally accepted sense. If they get into power it will not surprise me if they give far better government than the people have ever enjoyed before, along the Yangtze, as they are progressive, intelligent, and enlightened. Meanwhile, in the process of this evolution, China is like an ancient man suffering from growing pains, which may sound curious, but seems to describe what I mean to convey.

"Believe me, a Chinaman, who is a friend, has no superior in any nationality in all that one values as a friend. Their draw-

back as a nation is they have no Civil Service, or rather the whole personnel is changed every time a new war lord sits in brief power. . . .

"If you were out here now, and we have races on just now, and realised the sums of money that have accrued from the Parimutuel for development and local charity, which in England would correspond to the Government, you would scarcely believe it."

. . . . .

I should never have received that interesting letter but for Manna's contribution to Derby history, and who knows whether Manna would ever have been heard of but for the inspiration that came one day to a bullion broker in far-off Shanghai. Of course, the son of Phalaris and Waffles might have been heard of under another name. You can't keep a good horse down.

I have told of that lucky shot from the Far East which got right on the mark. What of those who have kept on letting off the most expensive ammunition without scarcely disturbing a feather, so to say? My thoughts when they run in that vein often bring to mind the truly melancholy experiences of Lord Beaverbrook as a speculator in yearlings. Papyrus and Manna were examples of Derby winners that had been through the sale ring as yearlings. I can imagine someone telling him the oft-told story of how intelligent and judicious buying in the Doncaster market would almost inevitably put his name on the roll of those who had experienced the great moments of leading in their Derby winners. And the Derby, of course, would not be all. There would be Ascot with its magnificent prizes and Cups, Doncaster, Goodwood, and Newmarket. The prospect could be made so alluring, never so much as to one whose knowledge of the subject is of the slenderest.

Papyrus and Manna! For the moment they had made it seem so very simple and straightforward. Just a trifling matter of being in the position to pay and then being assured of earning the right to be accepted as "A Pillar of the Turf." Then the transition into a high place in the breeding world would automatically follow. Jockey Club honours, perhaps, if you were not likely to be too difficult. Home-bred classic winners for certain.

Perhaps if Lord Beaverbrook had made his own selections of yearlings from his private knowledge of "make and shape" and of the Stud Book his utter want of success might have been better understood. But he accepted the advice of the sages and highbrows of breeding (most learned they are) and of those who are so often referred to, individually, in print as "that very fine judge of a yearling." According to all the canons of logic the outcome should have been marvellous, at least satisfactory.

What did happen? The first hundred thousand in hard cash went "West" if my rough calculations are not so very wide of the mark. Now that is not the sort of meat for a business man's appetite. The spell was comparatively short-lived. The Derby winners did not come along. Lord Derby, Lord Woolavington, Sir Hugo Cunliffe-Owen, Mr. Frank Curzon and Mr. W. Barnett were the lucky mortals with horses of their own breeding. The auction-bought yearlings for the time being were totally eclipsed, at any rate at Epsom. Perhaps the story is best conveyed in two sentences in a note I received from Lord Beaverbrook, following some observations which had interested him in an article I had written. "You are right," he said, "in saying that I am much disappointed with my yearling purchases. It all strikes me as a big gamble."

Disillusionment had come to one who realised that his luck in life lay in other directions, and that if he continued to seek it on the Turf he might be suspected of something other than merely a worthy resolve to support a "national institution." Such, at any rate, is how I read his mind and drew certain inferences therefrom. For the time came when he went out ripe with knowledge. I cannot pretend to mention all his big money purchases of yearlings. For a filly by Sansovino from the mare named Celiba he gave £7560. She did little or no good except that as a four-year-old she brought £1470. Lord Beaverbrook came in at the wrong moment in the career of that mare. One of her produce was a big winner in Italy. For the Rabona colt, at the same time, he paid £9450. He was cashed as a three-year-old for £640 10s. Known as Algonquin, he was preposterous too. If he had merit in his later days he would not show it. He much preferred standing still at the start. He paid big money for a colt from the National Stud

mare, Blanche. Naturally he would do so as she was the dam of that very good racehorse and fine sire, Blandford. Lord Beaverbrook came in at the wrong time again.

The year before he bought two at Doncaster. One was a filly by Captain Cuttle-Thracia, cost £5355; the other a colt by Hurry On-Allash (Sledmere bred), cost £6300. Three Derby winners, by the way, Hurry On had already sired. Perhaps it was like asking for the moon to expect a fourth so soon, if ever. Neither of those two saw a racecourse. The Allash colt, after being put on the list of geldings, was sold for £115 10s. He paid £8400 for Upsalquitch, a colt by Gainsborough from Glaciale, and got £750 after running him once. True the breeding was of the purple, but the one with the Canadian name ran once, unplaced. Lord Beaverbrook calculates that he spent £200,000 on yearlings, etc., and that the net cost of his brief racing experience was £150,000. His absolute last racing possession was a colt by Gay Crusader-Orby Lass. He made a present of it to his friend Viscount Castlerosse. Conscious as it seemed of not belonging to Lord Beaverbrook any longer the colt showed promise on the racecourse. It was going to win at Kempton Park, but could not because of sore shins. "It is my belief," wrote Lord Castlerosse, in all gravity to me, "that Beaverbrook went over in the dead of night and kicked him."

. . . . .

One can never introduce the subject of big money buyers of yearlings without Lord Glanely jumping right into the picture. If you know him you will understand that when he is present little room is available for others. Racing, breeding, buying and selling, all are full of amazing contrasts. No one knows that better than Lord Glanely. He won the Derby of 1919 with Grand Parade, for whom as a foal in Ireland he had paid only £470. He was a son of a Derby winner in Orby. It had seemed so very easy. Easy things, easily gained things, may have such big consequences on the Turf. Lord Beaverbrook is only one of a host who probably thought of the instance of Grand Parade.

He was unlucky, I suggest, that he did not win the Derby of 1934 with one that had cost him as a yearling no more than 510 guineas. Oh, yes, I know I am raising a point highly

controversial. It will have been settled one way or the other should Windsor Lad have emphatically confirmed with Colombo that beating of a length and a neck at Epsom. It may never be settled should such a meeting have not taken place. In any case the Derby cannot be staged again. We must built up conclusions based on happenings when it was run and draw reasonable deductions from them.

It will not be denied that Colombo was held in a pocket all the time they were descending Tattenham Corner. On the top ground, while they were beginning the left-handed, downhill turn, he was ideally suited. He was in the position from which Derby winners generally come. His jockey, W. R. Johnstone, who was having his first year of riding in England as Lord Glanely's retained jockey, was riding in a Derby at Epsom for the second time. On the hot favourite he obviously was satisfied to follow Tiberius and Medieval Knight, hugging the rails as they were. Other horses, including Windsor Lad, were on his outside. When Windsor Lad was urged forward with a clear open road ahead as the turn into the straight was made Colombo could not immediately follow.

The one to follow was Easton, the mount of Gordon Richards. Fleetfoot and one or two more were on Colombo's right and all were bending to the left, the jockeys all anxious not to lose ground by coming wide at the foot of the Corner. Medieval Knight was spun out and weakening fast. Colombo, according to his jockey, had momentarily to check, too, as he was close on the other's heels. By the time the favourite was through, having to come most unusually wide into the course, Windsor Lad got a precious start of a few lengths. Colombo had never been beaten as a two-year-old; he had won the Craven Stakes and then the Two Thousand Guineas as a three-year-old, his only races before the Derby; but he could not give away so much start to a really good colt in Windsor Lad that had won his only two races as a three-year-old, the Chester Vase and the Newmarket Stakes, each one most convincingly. I shall always think April the Fifth was a most worthy Derby winner in 1932 and undoubtedly a very good horse because he was even further behind half-way down Tattenham Corner than Colombo was. But the horses in front broke up more fortuitously for him than for Colombo in his year. It must be put down to the luck (or the ill-luck) of the game.

There is such a thing, quite understandable, of arguing that one's chances of getting a prize in the lottery must increase with the soaring of the price. No one should have fewer illusions as to that than Lord Glanely. Grand Parade was his first and up to the present, fifteen years later, his last Derby winner. He has been buying and breeding ever since. He can still claim to have given the record price at auction of 14,500 guineas for a yearling, one, by the way, that never won a race. The reminder may bring some slight solace to Lord Beaverbrook. He paid that tremendous sum not so long after Grand Parade had set him alight.

There was to be no turning back. One gathers that many 14,500 guinea failures would not have dismayed him. Besides, it is not in him to be beaten when he has decided to buy at the ringside. If I were the owner of a much admired and well-bred yearling in the ring I should derive much comfort from seeing Lord Glanely being opposed, knowing that he would go on, finally to silence his challengers. Some may look upon this as a form of vanity. The gesture of the long purse if you like. I prefer to think it is something a little deeper, perhaps the fancy a man has taken for a young thoroughbred and faith in his own judgment that it will be vindicated in due course. It is hard at such moments to lose faith and see what you believe in so much passing into the possession of another.

When in 1932 Lord Glanely, acting for a syndicate of British breeders, bid 47,000 guineas for the stallion, Solario, it is possible that he had exceeded the limit agreed upon. I really believe if the bidder from America had raised that record sum by another thousand he would have exceeded his instructions, so to say, and gone on. Then, having bought, he would probably have apologised for what he had done and offered to make himself responsible for the difference. It is hard, I suppose, to resist the desire to go on. It is possibly a sort of fever which sends up the temperature for the moment.

Now since Lord Glanely won the Derby so many years ago he can point to two classic triumphs in his name, both gained with high-priced yearlings, purchased by him at auction. One such success wipes out so many failures. So Singapore, after costing him 12,500 guineas and threatening to be a failure because of being difficult to train in his early career, won for

him the St. Leger and is now an important revenue-getter at the stud.

Lord Glanely is a fine buyer and a bad seller. I have shown why he is hard to beat when he comes to the ringside and begins those little lifts of his catalogue. Perhaps it is useful at times to have that reputation. A competing bidder will probably abandon the fight when he sees who he is up against sooner than he would against you or me. The point is that the fine buyer, who is a bad seller, means that his stable or his stud, or both, are continually growing in numbers. Lord Glanely gives me the impression that he is most reluctant to sell a horse in training, a surplus mare, or yearling, if he believes there might come a day when he would deeply regret having done so. He is striving to win races, the best races. Why, therefore, sell horses that might win though they hold out little hope of doing so at the time of drafting?

I cannot recall any horse that he has owned passing into other ownership to do specially well. I am unable to cite an instance of a mare weeded out of his stud that has bred a notable winner. Lord Derby, on the other hand, is an infrequent buyer and does not mind sending up for sale some of his best mares if he thinks he is already well stocked with the lines of blood they represent. In that way Sir Alec Black got Garpal who became the dam of Mr. William Woodward's One Thousand Guineas winner, Brown Betty. Garpal later found her way into Lord Glanely's stud. The fine buyer fancied her. It was from Lord Derby's stud that Lord Woolavington got Berystede, who became the dam of Manitoba, a Derby failure, but a Derby favourite, nevertheless.

I could continue quoting instances. Lord Derby, and those who think like him in resisting possible evils of unrestricted expansion, can expect good prices. The bad seller cannot have it both ways. Lord Glanely has sacrificed a great deal in trying to "make" a number of his horses as stallions. Such horses may not have been of high class, at any rate in the matter of racecourse performances. If they had been their fees would not have been such as to have brought them within reach of the humblest breeder, while it would not have been necessary to mate so many of his own mares with them. The process and policy have meant a large mare population at his group of studs on the outskirts of Newmarket, and, of course, an annual access

of new-comers. Thus, numerically, it must certainly be the case that Lord Glanely is the leading breeder in England. I have seen his interest ever growing. Indeed it can be said to have expanded in such a way as to correspond with the genial rotundity of his own figure when one thinks of his modest entry into racing as Mr. William Tatem, the Cardiff ship-owner, then as Sir William Tatem, Baronet, and to-day as the much esteemed Lord Glanely, member of the Jockey Club.

. . . . .

Sir Abe Bailey hung up the receiver. Then he had time to receive me into his conversation again. "That's that," he remarked in a quiet decisive way. Obviously, he had just done something to leave him satisfied. He sank back into the deep long chair and gazed out to the sea through the open doors and deep windows. Some scenes and happenings can never fade from one's memories. This was one in mine. The sunlit restless sea, the unceasing murmur from the breakers dispersing their power in hissing surf on a marvellously white beach, and at this end of the wireless telephone to London one who at the moment had set alight the Kaffir market in Throgmorton Street and its purlieus.

We were in the high and spacious reception room of his enchanting home at Muizenberg not so far from Capetown. Its position on the Peninsula brings you face to face with the Indian Ocean. Behind you, just over the hill and the shoulder of Table Mountain, is the South Atlantic. "I've just been talking to London. My third call this morning. Eight pounds for three minutes," he said.

Then: "It may or may not be expensive to me," and he gave that chuckling laugh which no one enjoys more than he does. Here at the end of the marvellous wireless phone was a big fortune builder, Empire builder who has specialised all his life on South Africa for the Empire, financier, politician, sportsman, with a wide gamut but with an enduring love of the thoroughbred in the paddock and on the racecourse.

Some men succeed in breeding their own Derby winners. Many more bid to do so by purchase, usually from the ring-side. A few aim at the elusive target from double barrels. They both breed and buy. Obviously we see here the pull of the long purse. Sir Abe Bailey has tried both over a span of



many years and he has yet to succeed. I know of no one more deserving of the belated luck when at last it comes his way. Failure to do so has not been for want of trying, of patience quite amazing, and of any stinginess in buying.

Very soon after the War he won the Gimcrack Stakes with a colt named Southern. A born optimist in racing and breeding, he immediately began to look forward to the next year's Derby. In his heart I am quite certain he began to build. I so well remember the horse for two reasons. Sir Abe carried out the obligations of the owner of the Gimcrack Stakes winner, that is to say, he duly turned up at the annual banquet as guest of honour and made a very long and revolutionary speech. Now Sir Abe has got where he has because he has ever had vision. It was the priceless possession of Cecil Rhodes, the man who more than any other influenced his life and work in South Africa. At that dinner at York he urged the Jockey Club to introduce the Pari-Mutuel or the Tote, and drew a glowing picture of the incalculable benefits that would accrue to racing and breeding. He said other things and fired off much criticism, much of it constructive after being destructive; indeed I have often thought that the making of that speech probably postponed his election to the Jockey Club. He had to wait some years before that honour was accorded him. I cannot recall that he has agitated since, but then he is older and has had leisure only for private business affairs. I suppose business is a form of leisure for him. He and a phone, with pen or pencil, and crowds of figures, will never be divorced.

To return to that Southern. He heard in South Africa that the colt was wintering well and the little castle of hopes was still growing until one day, like so many castles of the kind, this one crashed to leave the builder incredibly dazed. His authorised agent in England had scratched the colt for the Derby—by mistake! He may have written the name inadvertently, perhaps intending to scratch some other horse. But there it was. The deed was done. Sir Abe might have thought at the time that he had been deprived of the distinction of leading in the Derby winner. Probably the colt would have finished last, judging from his subsequent form.

In 1925 he was again the owner of the Gimcrack Stakes winner. This time it was a colt named Lex. Sir Abe did not attend the dinner. Always frank and blunt in his speeches he

may have been afraid of perpetrating anything that might have been construed by sensitive authority as an indiscretion. Of course I might be quite wrong. Anyhow he found South Africa calling him back for its glorious summer and he answered and left. Now in the meantime Lex had beaten the crack colt of the year, Coronach, for the Middle Park Stakes. They had betted 8 to 1 on Coronach in what was a match. It was a fluked result, though the owner of Lex would not have it so. If you had told him that the better colt had won he would certainly have agreed with you. It was a good enough case for building again on the very airy foundations of the next year's Derby. The reader may recall what happened. Coronach did win the Derby as well as the St. Leger. Lex lapsed rather badly.

I once asked Sir Abe which race in his time had brought him most money. I was not, of course, thinking of the actual value of a race but of money won in bets. He has ever been keen on garnishing a mere stake with the assistance of the substantial bookmakers. The desire may have weakened with the passing of the years. Now I quite expected him to name the Royal Hunt Cup won by Dark Ronald, because this horse must have been one of the best things ever known for a big handicap in England and they knew it. Knowing it the owner went for a big win. Soon the outside world knew all there was to know. Sir Abe is the most open man I have ever known in racing. Dark Ronald started favourite at 4 to 1 and won, pulling up by two lengths after zig-zagging up the wide course at Ascot to the consternation of thousands of onlookers who were wanting him first past the post. What an absolute "sitter" he must have been.

Sir Abe did not mention this race. He quoted one in South Africa. It happened some years ago when one of his horses won a big handicap in Johannesburg on which there is a vast amount of betting. But the reference to Dark Ronald comes in usefully because this horse became all important in the owner's subsequent luck as a breeder. Dark Ronald, who was a son of Bay Ronald (the sire of Bayardo), was sent to the stud to gain very special distinction, first in England and then in Germany. Why, after a few years at the stud in England, Sir Abe let the Germans have him I could never understand. It, nevertheless, did happen, but not before he had sired for his owner, Son-in-Law, with whom he won the Cesarewitch. One

could quote many instances of how this or that horse became the foundation of leading studs. There is the classic instance of St. Simon and the Duke of Portland's inspired purchase of him as a yearling on the death of Prince Batthyany, who had bred him. A whole volume could be written around the personality of that great horse and his influence.

So we have Son-in-Law in turn taking the highest honours as a sire though no horse by him won the Derby. But for his owner he sired an Ascot Gold Cup winner in Foxlaw, and Foxlaw, in his turn, sired a Gold Cup winner in Foxhunter. Not only so but another gallant horse, one named Trimdon, twice the winner of the premier Cup race of England, owed paternity to Son-in-Law. Foxlaw also won the Jockey Club Stakes, in which he finished in front of the St. Leger winner, Solario, the horse that one day was to make the world's record public sale price of 47,000 guineas.

"Did I not tell you," he said to me triumphantly after Foxlaw's win on that occasion, "that Foxlaw was a better horse than Solario? This result proves it. Never mind what they say about Solario not being quite himself. I tell you Foxlaw is a better horse to-day, and he always will be. You know you thought I was joking when I told Jack Joel that Son-in-Law was a far greater sire than Sunstar."

Never was there an owner-breeder who could take such pride in possession. Yet it was not always the case. What of Tishy? I should have liked to leave out her name if only because I have to confess that I was one of those slightly mesmerised by this notorious filly. She was a daughter of Son-in-Law, and, therefore, accepted as a stayer. The previous year Sir Abe's trainer, Reginald Day of Newmarket, had won the Cesarewitch with a filly named Bracket though not in the ownership of Sir Abe Bailey. A lot of money was won which went into various quarters. The trainer had won a Cesarewitch, as I have told you, with Son-in-Law. He was regarded as a specialist where the Cesarewitch was concerned. It was just one of the circumstances that made up the conspiracy that resulted in Tishy becoming one of the heaviest backed horses that ever went to the post for this long distance handicap.

Other circumstances were that she had some form over a distance and that the weight given her seemed to underestimate what she had accomplished in public. Very far ahead



LORD LONSDALE WALKING WITH THE AUTHOR TO THE Paddock  
AT EPSOM TO INSPECT THE DERBY HORSES OF 1934



of the race Sir Abe and his trainer must have made up their minds that in Tishy they had another winner of the Cesarewitch. It all seemed so very easy and straightforward. Apart from each other the owner and trainer are by temperament great optimists. Together I can imagine how they enthused in conference. Now there can be some danger in an excess of optimism. Pessimism can be tedious and irritating enough if carried to excesses, and we know that certain trainers, who are regarded as being pessimists, merely assume the pose in order to cover disappointments. But optimism, which has the thinnest of support, can sometimes start an avalanche.

Such is what happened in the case of Tishy. Long before the race she had assumed the unbeatable part. Who did not wager and accept any price was missing the chance of a lifetime. Few care to have such reproaches flung at them when too late. And so Tishy's price shortened every day. I was allowed to see her in her box a fortnight before the race. She was a really good looking mare. There was no superfluous flesh on her. She looked hard and fit, obviously one that had been through the preparation as prescribed by one who all his life has been a believer in strong medicine.

Did she win? She came in the most inglorious last I have ever seen for such a tremendously backed starter. Tailed off she was about a furlong behind as the winner, Yutoi, was going past the post. Sir Abe Bailey was flushed and perplexed, though no better loser was ever born. The wretched filly's jockey, Tommy Weston, was ever one to come to the point brusquely even in those days when he was much younger than he is now.

"What happened?" he said, in reply to the inevitable question. "Why, nothing at all. Only that she kept changing her leg and wouldn't take hold of her bit. She ran a cow, a dog." He meant she would not try to race.

Now there would have been some saving of faces, if, say, the lady had fallen lame in making a valiant attempt to win, or even if she had been left at the post, or, again, if she had dropped dead half-way through. But there had to be an owning up, mitigated only to the extent that a racehorse, which will not race, can be accepted as some excuse for having built too confidently on it. Tom Webster, of course, did not bother about the distinction between "changing" a leg and "crossing"

her legs. He decided that she had deliberately crossed her legs, and so in his brilliantly amusing cartoons he immortalised her.

For Sir Abe it was much more serious. His own losses, of course, did not worry him. But I am sure he did feel enormously for the many who had lost their money over such a preposterous failure. It was all, as he said at the time, so "humiliating and depressing." He had thoughts of chucking up his big interests in breeding and racing. He also had second thoughts, and they prevailed as they so often have done in his racing life. In his heart, though, he may never have forgiven Tishy to this day. She was cruel to him to the last. He sold her along with a number of others at the end of the year. The next season she was racing in the colours of that sardonic humorist, Mr. James de Rothschild, and for him she won a long-distance handicap on the July course at Newmarket. That perhaps was rubbing it in to Sir Abe. But now heed the most comical thing of all. Mr. de Rothschild backed her to win the next Cesarewitch. So did the public. And she decided to finish just about last again. Oh, Tishy of immortal memory! If you ask me the reason of her grim Cesarewitch failure I would say that her strong preparation soured her and that the evil mood finally overwhelmed her under the stress and excitement of the big field in which she found herself on Cesarewitch day.

## CHAPTER XIII

## FURTHER SKETCHES OF PERSONALITIES

Lord Astor—Mr. Somerville Tattersall—Lord Woolavington—Sir Hugo Cunliffe-Owen—Mr. Edward Esmond—Sir Alfred Butt—Stanley Wootton—Sir Wyndham Portal—Lord Queenborough—Mr. James de Rothschild—The Maharajah of Rajpipla.

**L**ORD ASTOR is the least obtrusive of the important people in breeding and racing on the English Turf. He has taken his place among the leaders, with whom he is likely to remain for long after these Memoirs have lost their freshness. I can imagine that while he started out to breed racehorses with some enthusiasm and a desire and will to succeed, he became really fascinated with his successes. There was then a very full incentive to maintain and even steadily increase them.

Of course there is romance in his story. It is never missing from any really good story of the Turf. We know that when at Oxford in 1900 he paid £100 for a mare named Conjure. His ideas then were simple enough. He would mate the mare with King's Premium sires and breed jumpers. He actually competed in the show-ring with this matron who was to become so famous as a hunter brood mare. She was merely "highly commended."

Conjure became the first mare in the Cliveden Stud. She had seven foals of which four were winners. One was about the first notable racehorse I ever saw at close quarters. She was Winkipop, who was trained by Willie Waugh at Kingsclere. I used to be a frequent visitor to the trainer in those days, and Winkipop, in whom her owner took the greatest pride, won the One Thousand Guineas, and according to her late trainer was a desperately unlucky loser later of the Oaks. Conjure died in 1921. She had lived for twenty-six years to become one of the three foundation mares of the stud which was to achieve world fame.

It is not difficult to understand that when a young man of



enthusiasms is so satisfactorily launched on what so many find to be vaguely charted seas he must go forward. The urge is irresistible. So, though Popinjay, the second foundation mare, had been acquired for 1000 guineas from the late Lord Rosebery four years before the classic triumph of Winkipop, something of a plunge, as prices were in those days, was taken when Lord Astor became the owner of Maid of the Mist. The year after Winkipop had won the One Thousand Guineas Maid of the Mist was among the bloodstock sold by Sir William Bass. She was bred in the purple. By Cyllene, sire of four Derby winners and himself a splendid racehorse, from Sceptre, than whom there has never been a better race mare since her day—such was the breeding of Maid of the Mist. She had at foot her first foal to be called Hamoaze, the sire of which was the staying Torpoint. She was carrying a foal by St. Frusquin. Lord Astor got this treasure of a mare for 4500 guineas. She lived for twenty-one years.

It is not easy to crystallize the history and enormous influences of the three mares in a few lines. From that first foal, Hamoaze, came four notable winners, her only foals, by the way. They were Buchan, who after running second for the Derby won two Eclipse Stakes; Tamar, another of the Astor string of Derby seconds, Saltash, an Eclipse Stakes winner, and St. Germans, also second for the Derby and in later years a signal success as a sire in the United States just as Saltash was in Australia. I do not exaggerate, therefore, when I write of the world fame of Lord Astor as a breeder and of his Cliveden Stud.

Popinjay, a daughter of St. Frusquin and Chelandry (both classic winners), lived for twenty-five years and had nine foals of which seven were winners. The year 1908 was the first one in which the Mr. Waldorf Astor of the time won any stake money. The amount was £882, not at all to be scorned by the beginner even though it did not place him higher than in 145th place in the winning owners' list at the end of the season. Now compare that with the total of £35,723 which in 1925 put Lord Astor at the head of the list. Here, then, was an ambition realised. One or two have still to be attained, including the winning of the Derby. He will be gaining a just and righteous reward if it should come to him soon after the publication of this book.

The average racegoer has not seen a deal of Lord Astor on our racecourses. He takes other things in life seriously too. Politics, social reform, interest in his wife's political career in and out of the House of Commons, and family ties, combine to make breeding and racing for him a hobby, though one to pay for itself if possible. It is surely the ideal way to participate in the breeding and racing of the thoroughbred. I do not need to be told that Lord Astor must devote a lot of time and thought to maintaining the status of the stud he has built up, chiefly through his own intelligent endeavours. The matings of the mares have been his personal concern. His mind has been influenced by years of study of the Stud Book and its lessons. Some essential knowledge of biological problems, and the judicious harnessing of scientific aids to practical experience as a stud master must have been utilised.

The management of his racehorses has been largely left in the capable care of Mr. Gerald Deane, who is Mr. Somerville Tattersall's partner in the famous auctioneering firm. Naturally, of course, the last word is with the owner and general policy is agreed upon. The results speak for the success of a singularly happy union of minds. It is marvellous how often the fat prizes at Ascot and elsewhere have been won even if the Derby has eluded them. That points to vision and careful planning a long time ahead. When a day of special expectations had arrived I for one could read the signs and they were seldom wrong. Lord Astor would visit the scene wearing the pink carnation so symbolic of his racing colours. Mr. Deane, of the active brain and mercurial temperament, would favour the same floral decoration. And so most certainly would that other ardent Mantonite, Mr. Somerville Tattersall, especially as pink is conspicuous in his own racing colours. If also the Manton trainer until 1928, Mr. Alec Taylor, also carried a pink carnation in his buttonhole, then the horse for the special occasion might be considered as good as past the winning post already. There have been so many of these special occasions in which I have participated in my role as commentator. My mind goes back to four Oaks victories at Epsom, to no fewer than six occasions at Ascot when the big plum of the meeting, the Coronation Stakes, for three-year-old fillies has been won. And there have been the four Eclipse Stakes, victories bringing

in approximately something like £40,000 in stakes, of Buchan (twice), Craig an Eran, and Saltash.

It was after Saltash had won at 20 to 1 when Lord Astor's other runner and hot favourite, Bold and Bad, was beaten that Lady Astor, in a voice which all could hear in the vicinity of the old unsaddling enclosure at Sandown Park, mockingly rebuked the trainer. "Oh, Mr. Taylor," she said, "why didn't you tell us this one would win?" Lord Astor's emotions must have been slightly mixed at the moment, even though betting never has meant anything at all to him. He was conscious of having won a five-figure prize, but he must also have been aware of the feeling of the listeners in and around the enclosure as they looked unspoken approval of Lady Astor's words. As though these things can be ordered like a grilled chop on a racecourse! As though reversals of stable ideas have never happened before! And as though they will never happen again!

Mr. Somerville Tattersall is one of the very wise men of the Turf. He likes to bet when he so fancies. To some that may not count as wisdom. They cannot discriminate between the one who bets with discrimination, and, therefore, wisely, and the one who bets on every race every day. Mr. Tattersall is fortunately placed. The Manton trainer, Joe Lawson, is in his employ. As one of the proprietors of that big stable he is naturally concerned with its fortunes even if there have also to be misfortunes.

He is a fine judge of a horse, for he has been looking at thoroughbreds of all ages all his life. He is unlike many in that he knows what to look for. The Stud Book must be a sort of Bible to him. The breed of the racehorse vastly interests him. He is meticulous for accuracy and expects it in others when alluding to pedigrees, weights, sex, dates, and happenings generally. His relaxation cannot possibly be racing and breeding because they are the breath and business of his life. He turns to classical music, while I know of his pride in his friendships with the late Sir Edward Elgar and with that great young master of the violin, Yehudi Menuhin.

He is still a great auctioneer in that quiet, cultured immensely-patient way of his. His more volatile partner, Mr. Deane, may get his results through storming along with his threatening "I can't dwell" and forcing bidders to make up their minds, but the senior partner gets there just the same.

I like to observe his touch of self-consciousness beneath the apparent calm, especially as the years have gone by, when he is about to sell some horse which he knows is going to make a lot of money. I did not see him sell Flying Fox for the then record sum at auction of 37,500 guineas to M. Edmond Blanc, but I saw him take Lord Glanely's last bid of 14,500 guineas for a yearling by The Tetrarch bred at the Sledmere Stud. And there was a shake in his voice, showing he, too, was sharing the excitement of all of us, when finally he announced that he had sold the eleven-year-old stallion, Solario, to the bid of Lord Glanely for 47,000 guineas and so saved the horse for British breeders.

If only for men like Lord Woolavington the years could be rolled back, how little would be the need for any anxiety as to the future type of big owner-breeder on the English Turf! Some men seem to wane in their interests, those interests which have given them such a hold in life, as life itself has waned for them. Lord Woolavington, then, must be an exception. For I often think his keenness on racing and on his breeding stud became more pronounced after he had passed the allotted span. What other man, having left his eightieth birthday behind, would have been keen to give £15,000 for Easton, second to Colombo for the Two Thousand Guineas of 1934, in order that he might have a worthy runner in the Derby.

I know it is easy to say that the man of wealth can do whatever he pleases where money is the primary factor. Yet there must be something far deeper than that in Lord Woolavington's patronage of the Turf during all these years. There has been genuine love of his horses and the ambition to breed the best from the best. In a sense this is much to be wondered at. His frail health in later years has not permitted him to haunt the racing stable, to stand on the Downs in early mornings and watch the gallops, and to make frequent attendances on racecourses when his colours have been carried. He has had to do his racing from the quiet of a sick room or from the peaceful retreats of Lavington Park in Sussex, Northaw, in the north of London, at times from Knockando in Morayshire, where his friends would be killing grouse and salmon, and at more favourable times in Berkeley Square in Town. So few would be satisfied to get so little for their money in that way.

He came into ownership under the assumed name of "Mr. Kincaid." It was, anyhow, rather ahead of my time, but I know of how he won a Cesarewitch with Black Sand and an Eclipse Stakes and other prizes with a gelding named Epsom Lad, which had been raced until he bought it at auction with only moderate success by the late Lord Rosebery. So the appetite was well whetted. I have written at length in another chapter on that outstanding horse of 1916, Hurry On, of the first Derby winner, Captain Cuttle, in the colours, and then of the second, Coronach, who seemed to be the most brilliant of them all.

Truly he has been a magnificent buyer in his time. Sometimes I doubt, even though he has won two Derbys, whether his successes have been commensurate with all the wealth he has put into his hobbies. But I have no doubt at all as to the joy his successes brought him, while his fine old Scottish philosophy and shrewdness helped him at all times to bear well the reverses. He did, I believe, see the victories of Captain Cuttle and Coronach. Naturally they rejoiced him. Yet I doubt whether either gave him very much more satisfaction than did the Goodwood Cup win of Brulette, which mare he had purchased some time after she had won the Oaks for the late Colonel Birkin. He had managed to get to the meeting from his near-by Lavington Park, and there I found this grand old Scot in his private box to congratulate him and be invited to drink of his wine or whisky. Innate tact made me instantly choose whisky.

I am glad, indeed, to have known him outside racing, to have talked with him on other things, national and world politics, Budgets, pictures, and books. He loved both pictures and books. His collection of sporting pictures and prints by old masters was to me unique. He was ever an ardent and devoted lover of Charles Dickens. It has been one of the pleasures of my intensive racing life to have known such a man and to have commanded his respect and unfailing courtesy.

One way and another Sir Hugo Cunliffe-Owen has been a prominent figure in modern racing in England. One thing of some importance he did was to lead in the Derby winner of 1928. His colt, Felstead, enabled him to do that, though both Lord Dewar, as the owner of Sunny Trace, and Sir Laurence Phillips, the owner of Flamingo, and Lord Derby, as the

owner of Fairway, had been much looking forward to carrying out that little bit of Epsom ceremonial. But Sir Hugo carried it as if to the ritual born. Fairway was scared through the appalling mobbing which he as favourite had to endure. Flamingo and Sunny Trace engaged in a cut-throat match and deflated what Professor J. B. Robertson would describe as their oxygen cells, and Felstead survived to bring off a 33 to 1 chance.

It has taken a considerable expenditure of Sir Hugo's breath during all the intervening years to maintain his point that the best horse won the Derby of 1928 and that the horse was Felstead. Never mind about the melting Fairway, and what Flamingo might have done had he been temperately ridden, the best stayer won! And that again was Felstead. A pity he could not be properly trained afterwards to convert the doubting Thomases. But at any rate the horse proceeded to make good at the stud. Only then did those who had doubted wonder whether they had been fair to this particular winner of the Derby.

I saw Sir Hugo give £10,000 for the French sprinter, High-born II, during the Ascot meeting and then proceed to win a race with it at the meeting, this time, of course, in his colours. He would have liked to buy Easton for £10,000 but as you know he was £5000 overbid. He is one to take strong views about this and that at times. Like most of us he prefers long prices to short prices about winners, and he is out to get them if possible. We know he can deal well in his great business enterprises. He brings something of the spirit into his racing deals. For instance, he could not have agreed with a well-known jockey, who, after a race at Ascot, told Lord Carnarvon that his two-year-old King Salmon was no good. No good? The popular "Porchy" found it hard to believe, but the jockey was one of the seniors who appeared to know what he was talking about. Sir Hugo may not have agreed, or, if he did, he thought he would take a chance in offering £1500 and another £500 when the colt won its next race. Before Ascot "Porchy" would not have taken £5000 for King Salmon. But he did take Sir Hugo's money and Sir Hugo took the colt that in his colours ran second for the Two Thousand Guineas, Newmarket Stakes, and Derby, after which he sold him to Sir Richard Brooke, a breeder, for 7500 guineas. For Sir

Richard, King Salmon won the Coronation Cup at Epsom and Eclipse Stakes, and one man at least on the course, this senior jockey, could not say: "What did I tell you?"

Mr. Edward Esmond is the one man I know who could be on the racecourse and not know a horse of his had won an important Cup race until after the winner had gone past the winning post. It was at Goodwood in 1933, when for the Cup he had two of the five runners. Both had won at Ascot, but one happened to be a horse of much more accomplishment. That was Foxhunter who had run twice at Ascot, the second time to win the Gold Cup at 25 to 1. The other was Sans Peine, a three-year-old that had just squeezed home for the King Edward VII Stakes.

Sans Peine it was that won. It was in the nature of a fluke that he ran at all. He would not have done so had the redoubtable Brown Jack been accompanied to the post by his faithful pace-maker of many years, Mail Fist. Why Mail Fist could not play his usual part this time I can only guess. He must have been off colour not to have been capable of making one of his infrequent outings to make a gallop for a mile and a half and then rapidly fade out. The point is that if he had run Sans Peine would not have done so. In that case Brown Jack would have won! Mr. Esmond and his trainer wanted a good gallop for Foxhunter. They waited until the last minute to see whether Mail Fist would be declared a runner, and, when it was realised that he would not be in the little party, they decided to start Sans Peine. His mission was to be a pace-making one. They could not think of his proving better at the weights than Foxhunter on whom they were laying odds of 11 to 4.

Foxhunter looked to be the greatest possible certainty. Brown Jack seemed to be only half-heartedly fancied this time. The ground was about as firm as ever Goodwood can be. He was without his helpful friend Mail Fist, who by setting a pace had made it difficult for the doubtful stayers. As he was leaving the parade ring Mr. Esmond was joined by Lord Lonsdale, who suggested he should come and see the race from the Duke of Richmond's private box. This he did. He saw Foxhunter suddenly falter just when he looked to be coming to win his race. We knew afterwards that the horse had broken down.

Mr. Esmond turned to talk with the Duke, and he confesses that all he could hear, without paying any more particular attention to the race, was "Brown Jack wins, Brown Jack wins!" The horses had passed the post, and he left the Stand under the impression that Brown Jack had won. A friend rushed up and joined him saying: "Shall I congratulate you or sympathise with you?"

"That's very nice of you," rejoined Mr. Esmond, "but something must have happened to him. He must have broken down or he would have won."

"Yes, that's all right," hastily explained the friend. "But you've won the race."

The owner of the Goodwood winner glanced up at the number board and only then realised that Sans Peine had won. It rather reminded me of the story told by the late Richard Marsh when he saddled two for the Derby of 1898. They were the Duke of Devonshire's Dieudonne, who he fancied very much and was at a short price, and Mr. Larnach's Jeddah, who he could only fancy very slightly. When Jeddah won at 100 to 1 and Dieudonne was unplaced the late Lord Rosebery said to the trainer: "I suppose you are laughing on one side of your face and crying on the other!" The access of good fortune, so unlooked for in the case of Sans Peine, was, of course, much diluted by the misfortune attending his much better-known horse. Foxhunter could never run again.

Luck comes in distorted forms at times. Mr. Esmond had won the two most esteemed long distance Cup races of the year with long-priced horses. The price of Foxhunter at Ascot would not have been 25 to 1 had he not lost the Churchill Stakes the day before as a 5 to 4 chance. He certainly ought to have won, in which case he would have been much fancied by the public for the Gold Cup the next day. His jockey, H. Wragg, had the intelligence to accept the lesson. This time he made the right use of the horse's fine stamina, and there was a different story to tell. It was, I believe, Lord Rosebery who persuaded Mr. Esmond to run for the Gold Cup the next day. The owner may have had some natural reluctance to ask for two long-distance efforts within twenty-four hours on a firmed-up course, but Lord Rosebery rightly pointed out that the first race had really not been a race at all for the stayer. A year later the Aga Khan might have been



encouraged by the example when he followed the same policy with Felicitation, the only difference being that Felicitation won the Churchill Stakes and so very easily as to concede the claim that he, too, had been lightly let off on the first occasion. That was the horse's own doing. He was so superior to the rest as to go untroubled.

Mr. Esmond spends most of the year in France. At Mortefontaine close to Chantilly he has a first-class stud. It feeds his racing stable in France and is in turn fed by those of his horses which attain special distinction on the racecourse. He has bought lavishly in the open market of yearlings and mares for breeding. He got Foxhunter for instance in that way. It was he who gave the record price for a brood mare at auction of 17,000 guineas. Her name was Straitlace, and she had won the Oaks for the late Sir Edward Hulton. It was a good buy, too, because she produced high-class stock.

He can also claim to have won India's chief race, the Viceroy's Cup, with a horse specially sent out from France to race in the Tropics. Only the Aga Khan can be compared to him in that respect in his scattered though well regulated interests. As a man Mr. Esmond is, I am sure, one of simple tastes. He neither smokes nor drinks, what we weaker people must sometimes do. His natural charm and graciousness of manner bear polish at all times. It is apparent to all and not only the favoured. I am sure he believes most ardently in the importance of physical fitness, which is one reason why golf is his great relaxation. A man of such erudition is, indeed, fortunate, and the Turf is fortunate too that he should be so keen and understanding in maintaining the best ideals of breeding and racing.

I do not suggest that Sir Alfred Butt would ever let his gaze and thoughts wander from a race in which he had special interest. One day it will be a Derby, for, of course, the winning of one (or more) is what he is working up to, assisted by a trainer, Frank Butters, in whom he has the most abiding and complete faith. I can remember when he started as an owner in quite a small way. At that time he was one of the close personal friends of the late Mr. Solly Joel. They had big mutual theatre and City interests. The interests became less big, but Sir Alfred went on with his racing plans. Being a purposeful man of business, and beginning to be more and

more intrigued with ownership, his outlook steadily expanded. He had, of course, some sharp disappointments. They come at times to those who are regarded as specially lucky. He made more than one change of trainer until he found safe anchorage with the very successful Frank Butters. There is something to be said for the policy which favours riding with those of established success. Frank Butters had made a name for himself during the few years he trained for Lord Derby.

I will say that the Butt-Butters association, up to the time of writing, has been singularly happy, unclouded and fortunate. Orpen, second for Derby and St. Leger, and third for the Two Thousand Guineas, was bought cheaply at auction with the owner's money and the trainer's approval. So many were crabbing the horse and saying he would have only doubtful stud value for a physical reason. His breeder and owner, Sir John Rutherford, had died. The moment Orpen became the bearer of Sir Alfred Butt's colours he proceeded to carry out his new responsibilities right handsomely. He won the Churchill Stakes at Ascot. To be what I believe was Sir Alfred's first Ascot winner was a contribution of some importance. I saw the horse win the Yorkshire Cup at York, and he might, indeed, have gained Cup honours at Ascot but for failure to stand further training. As a racehorse, therefore, he proved a very cheap buy, and quite possibly as a stud proposition he may show that he was virtually a present to his owner.

Sir Alfred Butt was drawing closer to the classic standard when his Young Lover, not an expensive purchase in the yearling sale ring, won for him the Newmarket Stakes. And after all this he must take his place as one of those owners who is doing much in the nineteen-thirties to find the wherewithal to keep the most expensive game in the world going. We know he is serious about it too. He has bought a residence at Newmarket as every big owner seems to do sooner or later. And he rides out of a morning on a friendly and most amiable cob to watch his horses at their work and assimilate all the knowledge they impart and absorb learning from the mastermind of the trainer. I expect he is proving a singularly apt pupil.

Stanley Wootton once trained for Sir Alfred Butt. I recall an occasion when the owner wrote a glowing eulogy in print of his trainer. I think he described him as a genius as a trainer

and a maker of jockeys. Maybe Stanley Wootton would modestly disclaim any title to be ranked as a genius. He must not mind, however, my joining in the spirit of Sir Alfred Butt's tribute. Of all the prominent figures I have met and studied on the racecourse Stanley Wootton is one of the most intriguing. His father, Dick Wootton, may have lacked culture, which, however, never bothered him. He was no humbug in that sense. He had the ability to train racehorses in his own enlightened way, and, having said that, I can justly add that in exploiting them he blended shrewdness, bluntness and boldness, while never hesitating to exploit such useful knowledge as came his way through the eminence of his son, Frank, as a jockey, and, in a lesser degree, the riding activities of Stanley. He was brilliant as a maker of jockeys. The raw material went in at Treadwell House, Epsom, and came out the finished article.

Stanley Wootton inherited the best of his father's virtues. He, too, has been a brilliant maker of jockeys. They have come out of his exacting school in steady procession, those I mean that had been specially passed out by their master. His success has been no less as a trainer. He simply must be a trainer in the highest class because his horses look marvelously well for hard condition and fitness. That they do not take part in classic races is because Stanley Wootton long since decided to specialise and answer only to himself as an owner. He would train his own horses, which meant laying out his own capital on their purchase. His ideas did not coincide with those of the rich men by the ringside. They would not look twice at what he fancied and would bid for. He would find humble fields for them, and, after all, 5 to 2 in a selling race or minor handicap is just as good as 5 to 2 in one of the big affairs and, of course, they do not take as much winning. There was always the chance of getting something in the form of a prize out of the sale ring, a prize, that is, when measured by the outlay. In that way he got the colt he called Jim Thomas, which as a two-year-old won for him eight races and something like £8000 in stakes.

Stanley Wootton was born with much intelligence. He has done everything to develop it, to cultivate a distinctive personality and a breadth of outlook. His mind is logical and severely calculating. It is essentially his own mind and

extremely well ordered. His coolness at all times seems unnatural. He seems to have his mental equipment under severe restraint as to be icily unemotional. There is no aggression, no uncontrolled exultation, and no evidence of untold relief in moments of success. He may have won a lot of money in bets. He goes to the sale ring and bids openly for his successful plater. If his runner has given him no cause to go there he is impassive and even stoical in defeat. Really there is very little difference. He can laugh on both occasions. He is much liked and much admired by all who can recognise cleverly used intelligence. He never bids against the poor man whose one ewe lamb may have won. I have never known him bitter because someone has bought one of his selling platers. He was sorry to lose it and would have liked it back—at his idea of its value, not the other man's. I know there have been gaps in his career in later years when the sun of success did not shine on him. But they have been closed this long time, and so we have him to-day a personality of real force and character in the training and racing life of Epsom, a man of marked generosity, and a most staunch and loyal friend.

Sir Wyndham Portal and Stanley Wootton are close personal friends. Sir Wyndham used to haunt the Kingsclere stables in those closing days of its brilliant history when Willie Waugh trained for the Duke of Portland, the Duke of Westminster, Lord Falmouth, and Mr. Waldorf Astor. He lived just across the way, and he diligently toiled by day at the famous Laverstoke mills at which is manufactured the paper for our banknotes. The love of the racehorse may always have been in Sir Wyndham, but it was certainly cultivated in those days until, many years later, and having come into the baronetcy and a right to certain leisure, he launched out in ownership with that most able Irish trainer Martin Hartigan at Ogbourne.

Sir Wyndham Portal lives a crowded life. We know that it is an exceptionally useful one for the community generally. His social public services are most seriously tendered and ably carried out. Racing for him is a side-line to be enjoyed with the maximum of exuberance if at all possible. Such striking contrasts do Sir Wyndham and Stanley Wootton present to those fortunate enough to know them well. Amiable, bland, disingenuous, with scintillating wit and good humour, Sir Wyndham Portal is one of whom it is a pleasure to write even

though one be conscious of the pen-picture of his ample figure and sanguine outlook being inadequate.

Lord Queenborough should perhaps be written about more as a yachtsman than as a most agreeable figure on the Turf. He may think Luck has been rather mean to him. I really do not see why he should. I thought it was simply stupendous luck when in 1922 his colt St. Louis, practically unknown, and, therefore, entitled to be described quite truthfully as a dark horse, won the Two Thousand Guineas. Our race-cards told us that he was the property of Lord Queenborough. Perhaps few on the racecourse at Newmarket that day recognised in the fortunate owner the man who when Sir Almeric Paget had been a most exemplary Member of Parliament.

Two years before he had told the late Peter Purcell Gilpin that he might buy some yearlings for him at Doncaster. Thus was St. Louis, by Louvois out of Princess Sterling, and bred by Mr. Jim Maher in Ireland, secured on his behalf for 2600 guineas. He ran once as a two-year-old at Newmarket. Certainly he never came under my notice, and, indeed, I was unaware of his existence half an hour before the race for the Two Thousand Guineas. Then they said there was a lot of money in the market for St. Louis. One knew that the trainer favoured having a good bet when so disposed. Well, St. Louis the unknown won by three lengths at the short price of 6 to 1. He went to Epsom for the Derby and he did not win. He never saw the way Captain Cuttle and a few others went. I always thought he must have started to lose his action on the hard ground before going to Epsom. It was very hard there that Derby day.

I really do not know to this day how St. Louis came to be so well backed for his Two Thousand Guineas. It was, I believe, something of a mystery to Lord Queenborough. But there it was. The justification was in the result. Some folk were wise before the event and richer afterwards. Lord Queenborough will not quarrel with my conclusion that his one and only classic winner was not a really good horse. He was a stud failure beyond question. A few years later Lord Queenborough turned his attention to National Hunt racing and some success came his way, also some disillusionments, and he got out. Yet in his heart he loves racing. He may come back to it and

be just content, as I have often encountered him in recent years, to know what he should stake his pound or two on with the Tote. The rich man experiencing the thrill of the modest flutter! The parent of Miss Dorothy Paget, most lavish of owners under both sets of rules. What would he give, I wonder, to have the emotions of leading in a Golden Miller at Aintree or a Hyperion at Epsom?

If Lord Queenborough in these later years finds his fun in one or two pound wagers how vastly different it was when Mr. James de Rothschild made his frontal attacks on the bookmakers massed on the rails. I should not be surprised to know that he hated such publicity as was given to his betting, and it is quite possible there were exaggerations. Betting is a subject which so easily lends itself to exaggerations. Yet there was certainly something in it from a news angle that an individual should not only be known to bet at times to big money but should look beyond favourites for his mediums.

I have watched Mr. de Rothschild with that careless lounging slouch of his pass along the line of bookmakers and strike such wagers as suited him. The trouser line, informally corrugated, seemed to suit the mood of the man. They have told me that he usually starts by asking for over the odds. He is entitled, of course, to his ideas as to what fair odds should be. When a man is seen advancing, who they know is going to bet, the odds have a way of reacting to the advance before even a word is spoken. Argument may follow.

I think it is true that of recent years Mr. de Rothschild has cared less about betting. Again I judge only from observations. But some years ago, soon after the War, horses in his colours, Brigand and Milenko, won Cambridgeshires on which, as is generally known, there is a great deal of betting. It was before one of these races, probably Milenko's win to the best of my recollection, that I saw him make a last-minute visit to the "Rails," taking from each of those he chose to do business with the long odds on offer. The horses were at the post and awaiting the start. I was on the steps of the Private Stand at Newmarket prepared to watch the race. Milenko won at 100 to 7, and that day Mr. James de Rothschild had the sort of win one dreams about.

The Maharajah of Rajpipla is an admirable instance of the thrice blessed individual who runs a horse for the first time for

the Derby and gets away with the greatest of all racing prizes. The thought, I am sure, has kept recurring to him, and has tickled him no end. "It really is funny," he once remarked to me, "that what other people strive in vain for a lifetime, and spend millions as you might say to do, without succeeding, I should win at the first time of trying." When Windsor Lad won his only race as a two-year-old, and, perhaps a little luckily from Bright Bird, who for Lord Astor never won a race until July of the following year and then when helped by his maiden allowance, the Maharajah turned to me and remarked: "Well, that's my Derby Hope, such as it is. But I mustn't think of that. It's too much to hope for."

"Mr. Pip," as he is to his intimate friends, had changed his ideas some time before the Derby day of the following year. "Colombo?" he would say, "he won't win. Why should he beat Windsor Lad? My horse has won over a mile and a half. He has shown that he can stay. Colombo has not. You must have a good stayer to win the Derby. I shall beat Colombo. I shall win the Derby."

No hesitation and doubts about that, you will see. He put his belief into print, and I daresay thousands and tens of thousands backed Windsor Lad because of it. The little Indian Prince got a lot of his joy in the triumph out of the knowledge that so many were able to rejoice with him. Oh, yes, it was a popular victory beyond words, even though the downfall of the hot favourite, Colombo, was involved in it. And the vivid moments of triumph soon after? The Maharajah has told me that he was like one in a dream when he went out on to the course to lead in his horse. In other words he did not quite know whether he was going or coming.

Some time later, a few weeks had elapsed, I was a guest at his English home near Windsor. The Aga Khan was in the house playing Backgammon, which competes with Politics, Breeding, Racing, and Golf in the composition of his life's interests. Prince Aly Khan clutched a form book and was engaging in earnest conversation with one who is not unknown in racing. The beautiful Begum Aga Khan was talking fluently in her native French with friends in the shade of a big cedar tree. I had a cheque in my pocket for a very big figure, shall I say £40,000? And I was authorised to pay it to the Maharajah in exchange for Windsor Lad.

I never got as far as that because my conversational feelers told me that such a sum would certainly not appeal to one who was quite certain his hero would win first the Eclipse Stakes and then the St. Leger, and would obviously be worth in such event £60,000. The idea of selling now, he pointed out, and, I think, quite rightly, would be to give away the big chance of appropriating those big prizes.

"They would think me so mercenary," he said, "if I sold the horse now so soon after winning the Derby."

My private admiration for the thought was more than enough to keep the cheque in my pocket and the amount of it unrevealed until now.

Two or three weeks later, and we were on the same lawn. The Maharajah had sold Windsor Lad to me for £50,000. The purchase had been made on behalf of Mr. Martin H. Benson, who now appeared on the scene and passed over the Banker's draft. The Derby winner had been beaten into third place for the Eclipse Stakes, finishing a length from King Salmon, a four-year-old, and Umidwar, the latter receiving 10 lb.

We had seen the horse unluckily beaten. Everyone, except those concerned with King Salmon, agreed he ought to have won. He had been tucked in close the rails too long. His jockey had persisted too long in the belief that an opening would come. Too late the horse was pulled to the outside almost to collide with Alishah, out in the middle of the course. Then he was rallied and started to gain at every stride. But, too late!

And the Maharajah's change of heart and mind? There had been this sharp disappointment. There was £10,000 tacked on to the earlier tentative offer. He could offer no stud future for his own horse. So he yielded. Windsor Lad, a right worthy Derby winner, was bought for the prestige of the British thoroughbred in England.



## CHAPTER XIV

## DANNY MAHER AND OTHER AMERICAN JOCKEYS

Maher's champagne and biscuit lunch—Blamed for Bayardo and Lemberg defeats—Bidding for his services—Loyalty to Lord Rosebery—Why he did not ride Craganour—"Skeets" Martin as a St. Moritz celebrity—His tornado-like moods—The greatest curling joke—Matt MacGee and the glued stones.

**I** NEVER knew Danny Maher until his star was on the wane. Already he had ridden three Derby winners and lots of others which we call "big." In 1903, soon after his arrival in this country from America, he had been associated with a Triple Crown winner. Sir James Miller's Rock Sand had carried him to victory in the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger. Through the ages they have called such a valiant horse the Triple Crown winner. Once upon a time they were almost fashionable. Nowadays they are almost unknown. Some day there will be another Triple Crown winner, but it is the truth that twenty years passed and still there had been no other to emulate what Rock Sand and Danny Maher did.

In four years Danny rode three Derby winners. The second of them was Lord Rosebery's Cicero and that Derby in 1905 was the first I ever saw. His winner in the following year, Spearmint, he more than once described to me as far the best Derby winner he rode, and probably the best horse he ever rode, though he used to hesitate between that horse and Bayardo.

It was in 1913 at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool that Danny and I started a friendship which was to last during what was destined to be a brief stay on the Turf, and, indeed, to end a far too short life. One who was very much in his company at that time suggested that I should come up to his room at the Adelphi Hotel at Liverpool. The time was about noon, and racing was to start out at Aintree in two hours or less. I suppose I expected to find him dressed and prepared to receive

any visitors. We passed through the sitting-room into his bedroom. There he was in bed. The cheeriness of his greeting was in sharp contrast with my first impressions. His eyes were abnormally brilliant. His cheeks were flushed a bright red, not marking the glow of health but denoting the lung trouble which we all knew was bothering him and causing that rasping cough and shortness of breath.

I had seen him come in from riding a race. Perhaps he had been engaging in a hard finish, win or lose. He was breathing fast and hard and his words to the trainer or owner meeting him came between the gasps. Now the flush on his cheeks as he smiled a greeting came as a shock. It was so frightening because it was so unmistakable as to its meaning. The famous jockey must be far from well. He might never be as well again as he was then. By the bedside was a half-bottle of champagne, nearly empty, and a dry biscuit or two. Perhaps they represented his breakfast—and his lunch.

I am grateful that in the short interval remaining I got to know him rather intimately, so well, in fact, as to experience regret that I had missed seeing his triumphs on some of the greatest horses of the day. There were the three Derby winners I have mentioned. There was Bayardo, on whom he was never beaten after the Derby of 1909, except when the three-year-old Magic seemed to fluke him out of the Goodwood Cup. They blamed Danny for waiting too long on Bayardo, and that, in fact, he asked that grand horse to do the impossible.

They blamed Maher for Lemberg's defeat by Swynford and Bronzino for the St. Leger of the following year. Lemberg's owner, the late Mr. "Fairie" Cox—"Fairie" was his *nom de course* when such were permitted by the Jockey Club—certainly blamed the jockey, for there was a rupture which ended the association. And this came after Bayardo's defeat for the Goodwood Cup. Yet subsequent history suggests that Danny was denied justice. The later career of that brilliant horse, Swynford, makes it clear that Lemberg was beaten on his merits that day. The jockey declared at the time that Lemberg could not stay the mile and three-quarters at the tremendous gallop set up by Swynford. As the trainer of Swynford the Hon. George Lambton might, perhaps, be suspect of prejudice in favour of his own horse, but history, as I

have said, is on his side in the claims he has made that Lemberg was not an unlucky loser that day but one that was beaten fairly and squarely.

There was Maher's win of the Two Thousand Guineas on Neil Gow, when, after a magnificent battle, Lord Rosebery's rather wayward colt beat Lemberg with a few inches to spare. Lemberg took revenge later in the Derby when Neil Gow was only fourth, but then Neil Gow had thrown out a curb the week-end before and so could not have been as his trainer, Percy Peck, would have liked.

In the Spring of that year a big colony of rooks had nested as usual in the tall elms clustered round Lord Durham's Harraton House at Exning and the stables close by. At the time Percy Peck, as he had been for many years, was Lord Durham's private trainer, but by an arrangement he also had the care of Lord Rosebery's horses. Hence the presence of Neil Gow in those stables. Perhaps I need hardly say the Lord Durham of whom I am writing was "Jack," whose work as administrator on the English Turf will certainly live in history.

The rooks became an unendurable pest to him. Their garrulous early morning clamour at last determined him to have them exterminated, and the order went forth accordingly. Percy Peck was definitely alarmed on being told of the edict. He subscribed to the belief that if rooks desert their nests, either voluntarily or involuntarily, bad luck will come to those responsible. On the morning the trainer discovered that Neil Gow had thrown out a curb he remarked to Lord Durham: "There you are, my lord. Something was bound to happen. This comes of clearing out the rooks."

It was in the very early part of this year, 1910, that Lord Rosebery and Mr. Cox engaged in a duel-like encounter as to which of them should have first claim on the services of Danny Maher. The jockey had been riding up to then for Lord Rosebery. I have mentioned how five years before he had won the Derby for him on Cicero. Lord Rosebery, I know, was really very fond of him. The relations between them went beyond those which are usual as between owner and jockey. Lord Rosebery had unbounded admiration for him as a jockey. Perhaps it was Maher's natural charm and his exceptional intelligence that appealed. He had character

and personality. Lord Derby, for whom he rode for two or three years, also genuinely liked and admired him. What more could he have wished for except the capacity to have better distinguished between his friends? From some of them he should have been saved, but sometimes you cannot help one who is not willing to help himself. Danny's weakness was that he could not distinguish between the sincere and the insincere.

Mr. Cox had Lemberg as a three-year-old with fine classic possibilities. Neil Gow, owned by Lord Rosebery, as you will have gathered, was his principal contemporary. It was important that the services of the best rider of the day should be secured. Jockeyship might be the determining influence in turning the scales. On Bayardo in Mr. Cox's colours the year before Maher had been enormously successful. From Ascot onwards the combination had never been beaten. Lemberg's owner was now in the market as a determined bidder for Maher. I believe he offered a retainer of £4000. Lord Rosebery had not been giving one as big for first claim, but, of course, he had to be told.

My impression is that Lord Rosebery did equal the offer though I am sure Maher would never have broken the association. He was a great admirer of the man who had bred and owned three Derby winners, and now, with Neil Gow, looked likely to have a fourth triumph in store. When Lord Rosebery won that little argument Mr. Cox paid £2000 to Maher to secure the jockey's services for Bayardo as a four-year-old. And then Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, I believe, secured a third claim for which he paid the jockey £2000, so that his retainers that year came to £8000. It can be said to have paid Lord Rosebery to pay what he did for first claim since it is beyond doubt that Neil Gow would not have won the Two Thousand Guineas by that very narrow margin had not the great jockey ridden one of his masterpiece races. Then on Bayardo he won the Ascot Gold Cup and other big things until the combination fell up against that snag in the race between three for the Goodwood Cup.

I really think the history of that most dramatic and tragic of Derbys, that which so deeply shook the racing world in 1913, would have been written differently had Maher been able to accept the urgent invitation to take the mount on the favourite,

Craganour. That horse had been beaten a head by Louvois for the Two Thousand Guineas. All except the judge (and those connected with Louvois) vowed that a big mistake had been made and that really Craganour won comfortably. I thought so at the time, and subsequent running, as between the colt and Louvois, supported the notion, but I am not so sure to-day. I have seen so many optical illusions on the Newmarket course.

Two weeks later, when there was the race for the Newmarket Stakes over an additional quarter of a mile, they got Maher for Craganour. There was no mistake this time. The colt won easily. Louvois, one of his victims, was trounced. Now began some desperate angling for Maher to ride Craganour in the Derby. The obstacle was a filly named Prue, owned by Lord Rosebery, and trained for him at that time by Fred Pratt. It is, of course, most unusual for fillies even to be started for the Derby, but I have no doubt Lord Rosebery and his trainer were influenced by the fact of two fillies having triumphed since the century began. Instances had been extremely rare before then. But in 1908 Signorinetta had removed the veil of obscurity behind which the little Italian, Chevalier Ginistrelli, had been while training and owning a few horses in this country.

Signorinetta won the Derby at 100 to 1. Not only so, but she proceeded to win the Oaks two days later as if she might be the best in the world irrespective of sex. The Derby preceding that which Craganour was to win had been won by a filly. Tagalie, a grey, had won for Mr. Walter Raphael. That circumstance may have had much to do with the shaping of history in 1913.

As the day of the Derby of 1913 drew near it will be understood there was enormous public interest as to Maher's mount. Craganour was a heavily-backed favourite. His price would instantly close up on its being known that he would ride. Lord Rosebery wired me that he had in mind to start Prue, who, let me add, appeared destitute of any serious chance of winning. I let this be known. A day or two later, after a talk with Maher, I said there was a chance after all that the jockey would become available for Craganour. So the see-saw business went on until it was really settled by the jockey himself. I had this letter from Lord Rosebery:



DANNY MAHER AS HE WAS IN HIS PRIME  
Presented to the author in 1915 when his health was failing.



"I own I was a little surprised to see your announcement in the *Telegraph* after my telegram to you. But Maher has explained to me that the inspiration came from him.

"I have tried my very best for two days to get him to ride Craganour and let me find a jockey who would do for an outsider like Prue. But he says that he insists on riding Prue if she runs, and her trainer is very anxious she should run, while I cannot give up even an outside chance of winning the Derby. That is how the matter stands, and as I am afraid will continue to stand."

Alas, for the thousands and thousands the world over who lost their money over the disqualified Craganour when the race was taken away from him and awarded to the 100 to 1 chance, Aboyeur, Prue's trainer had his way. No one can blame him. After all he was being paid to train and do his best for Lord Rosebery's filly, and an owner gives a substantial sum as a retaining fee for all his horses to have the benefit of the good rider whose services he can claim.

Now if Prue, being a filly, had only been entered for the Oaks then any embarrassment that followed through being nominated for and left in the entry for the Derby would never have arisen. They would have secured the jockey whose special knowledge of the Epsom course, and whose brilliant ability and judgment would have steered clear of the circumstances that brought about the disqualification, though I am willing to believe Craganour was not likely to have been assisted to his success by at least one other jockey riding in the race. There was feeling over certain incidents in the management of the colt as a three-year-old and to this day I believe the tragedy to an extent can be linked up with such feelings. When they knew they could not get Maher they sent to France for Johnny Reiff, who was probably past his prime. He may have resented during the race along the straight the bumping as it originated and felt that he was entitled to retaliate.

The amazing Tod Sloan was before my day. In a sense I have many regrets. I missed the opportunity of making a close study of a unique personality, one who unquestionably began the drastic revolution in English race riding methods. Sloan, we are told, always rode crouched half-way up a horse's neck, whispering to it, setting the pace with uncanny judgment,



riding as if inspired when cocksure, and bursting with confidence and belief in himself.

Danny Maher gave you the impression of having more what might be called "culture" both in and out of the saddle. He was the true artist. Sloan was the relentless revolutionary who knew the secrets of perfect balance and poise and who could make horses run for him as the long-legged jockeys clearly could not do. Maher came to stay—until disease and the War ended his sparkling career. He showed his possession of brains and understanding when he gradually adapted his seat and length of rein to the gradients, undulations, and turns of our old established racecourses. He would never have built up the reputation he did had he maintained the only style he knew when he left the dead flat dirt tracks of America.

He had no greater admirer than his countryman J. H. ("Skeets") Martin. I always thought "Skeets" willingly accepted that inferiority complex which emanated from Maher, though the latter did not consciously hand it out. I shall always, too, have a regard for him if only for the reason that he rode the first Derby winner I ever backed, perhaps, indeed, the first bet I ever had on the Derby. That was Ard Patrick, the big horse that won for the Irishman, Mr. John Gubbins, in 1902.

Years later I used to see a lot of "Skeets" at St. Moritz. He got Maher there years before the War and made him take on the Cresta Run and make one of a crew on the Bob run. He was a great skip and tutor of Curling, first-class on skis, and seemed, indeed, to be "Mayor and Corporation" and everything else at St. Moritz.

This American dropped out of racing but never out of wintering amid the snows of the Engadine. He was light of stature to the point of being skinny and so lean that the wrinkles stood out like tramlines in his rather sullen face. He had a fierce and uncontrollable temper at times, especially with people who could not see his point of view. One moment he would boil up like an untamed cat; the next he would lapse into sullenness. He would go "on the waggon" knowing that it was for his own good. But for the German doctors he would never have got over the cutting about of his abdominal arrangements. Then he would sometimes slip off the "waggon" with an ominous bump. And when he did so his friends would

quietly seek cover like frightened rabbits while he would want to push the mountains into the lake. A queer cuss, but big-hearted all the same. A thinker in between brain storms with a wise-cracking snap in his talk which at times attained the velocity of machine-gun fire. Then silence, perhaps gloom, but always a personality who rode a Derby winner and had in fact a long and popular reign in English racing.

There was another American jockey who rode one of our Derby winners. He was Matt MacGee, who rode in France for years and was on Durbar II when that moderate horse won the Derby of 1914 for his American owner, Mr. H. B. Duryea, the last Derby to be run at Epsom, by the way, for five years. Racing folk in England never had a chance of knowing much about MacGee. He came over so seldom. That, nevertheless, he should possess the distinction of having ridden a Derby winner gives him a special place in modern Derby history. There must have been some good in Durbar II. He had some bright form in France, and perhaps I do him only tardy justice. The little I remember about that race is that Black Jester, ridden by George Stern, who also had been brought over from France, caused his owner, Mr. Jack Joel, and trainer, Charles Morton, to pull long faces, for their horse collapsed like a non-stayer at the foot of Tattenham Corner. Yet later in the year Black Jester proved stayer enough to win the St. Leger.

Matt MacGee was a natural comedian and skilled in leg-pulling. He looked more like a hard and exceedingly tough boxer rather than one who is made undersized by Nature in the first place. Seeing him, as I used to, several winters running in St. Moritz, you wondered how such a sturdily-built fellow could ever ride at flat-racing weights in France, even though the weights there, generally speaking, are on a higher scale than in England.

These American jockeys were all crackajacks at the winter sports. "Skeets" Martin, Danny Maher in his day, though he was nothing like as serious about them as the other boys, Frank O'Neill, and Matt MacGee—they stayed long in the winter and worked hard. No wonder they were adepts, and ever ready to lend their aid and advice to others not yet out of their novitiate stage.

Here is the true story of how MacGee came to have his

name changed among the St. Mortiz curling fans to MacGlue. I know because I was one of his victims. A day curling match was arranged between the jockeys and The Rest. It was to take place on the single rink belonging to the Chantarella Hotel, which overlooks St. Moritz. It was the pension home of the jockeys. They found themselves short of a fourth and roped in the most unjockey-like person in St. Moritz. He was the late Joe Cooper, rotund, rubicund to the point of having a burnished and fiery red face, peeling beautifully to the sun and rarefied air of the mountains. He was the benign and complacent bookmaker personified.

At lunch-time the scores were fairly even. There was the prospect of a good and sporting finish. Such a possibility was too much for MacGee. Our jockey hosts made a feast of the luncheon. Some time before it had run its long course, a Cesarewitch sort of affair it was, MacGee must have sneaked off unobserved. He got possession of a pot of glue and returned to the ice-rink. With diabolical cunning he now proceeded to put a layer of the sticky mess not on all our stones but on one of each pair.

Now you can imagine what he had in mind. The owner of stones so doped and doctored might first proceed to send down the glued stone. It would, of course, pull up long before reaching the "House," and the sender would suffer the humiliation of seeing the stone taken off the ice because it had not passed over the boundary mark of play. Obviously he must put more effort, much more in fact, into his next throw. He did so and the unglued stone would go hurtling and rushing across the rink and put itself out of action in that way.

Now the Skip, who had yet to make contact with his doped stone, could not believe his eyes. "What's the matter with you all?" he shouted in amazement. He made disrespectful allusions to the folly of over-doing one's self at lunch. His No. 2 player and then his No. 3 did the same thing. Then, indeed, sorrow turned to scorn. MacGee was loudest of all in expressing surprise at such dramatic and inexplicable loss of form. "Gee," he said, "you bet they've drunk too much. They don't know what they're doing. We're wasting our time."

Then the Skip, always reliable and proud of his reputation, took his turn. He made an appalling mess of things. He

looked puzzled and now had to address us with rather less austerity, with some humility in fact. The jockeys engaged in open gaiety which had an unnatural ring about it in the circumstances. I found it necessary to look hard at MacGee, who winced suspiciously under the stare. I turned to look at the uncanny performance once more of the doped stone. I saw it had collected a few stray strands from the sweeping broom, particles of ice were sticking in a strange way. The stone was distinctly carrying much more overweight than it should have done. It had to be wiped and then—something sticky soiled the glove. That is the end of the story as it was the end of that match. The joke was on us. We got the award on an objection, framed, lodged, and adjudicated upon by ourselves. We saved our stake, but, most important of all, we got a big laugh out of the criminal plotting of this Yankee jockey-joker.

## CHAPTER XV

JAMES WHITE: HIS TRAINERS AND STEVE  
DONOGHUE

A night at Rochdale—Craving to break the bookmakers—An amazing deal over a Manchester Cup winner—When he bought Daly's Theatre for £200,000—The tragi-comedy of Cloudbank's Goodwood Cup—Missed winning £20,000—Counter-attraction of Mr. "Solly" Joel's luncheon-room—When Donoghue won his £1000 present at Manchester.

**J**AMES WHITE was one of the strangest, crudest, and one of the most erratic men that ever came into racing in my time. The first time I met him was soon after racing had been resumed after the War. Steve Donoghue introduced me to him in his rooms at the Midland Hotel, Manchester. He lost no time in calling me by my Christian name.

"Come on, Sidney," he ordered, rather than said, "you've got to wome wi' me and Stephen to-night. We're going to dinner in my home town of Rochdale. Tommy Reece (a special friend at that time of Donoghue's) is coming too, and there'll be so and so, and so and so, an' you'll fair enjoy yourself. Ah'm the President of the Cricket Club and they think the world of their League cricket an' this is their annual dinner and ah'm in the chair. So you've got to come."

If Jimmy White was interested in you he soon made it his business that he should know you and that you should know him just about as much as he wanted you to. We made good progress that night. Sir William Berry (now Lord Camrose) was of the party, and the Mayor of Rochdale lent municipal importance to the visit of their townsman who was now a very big noise in London and was regarded by them as being enormously wealthy. They could bask in some of the glory he deigned to shed on them. They fawned upon him, showered upon him the flattery which he adored, and lapped up his words as he spoke of his pride of birth in Rochdale.

I was, of course, to know him better, but certain first impressions remained because they had been rightly conceived. His eyes were steely and glinting rather than flashing. He rolled them from side to side, never up and down. He surveyed his hearers as one does a panorama, keen to observe the impression he was creating. He had to impress them. His way of doing so was to monopolise the conversation in his immediate vicinity. He would listen when a sycophant with a special penchant had something specially palatable to say. Then back again to money. Always flirting with his chief god! Always out to break the other man!

It pleased him to think he could show off Donoghue, the champion jockey of the day, to his townsmen. Steve had been only a name to them. Here he was in the flesh because the champion was his jockey, his well-paid servant.

There were times when his eyes lost their compelling expression. They narrowed as the eyelids drooped and he was telling himself and his friends that he was going to get his own back on so and so. He would speak then as if the offender's number was already in the frame as one doomed. He would speak thus of bookmakers though to their faces he gave them their Christian names and deluded them into thinking they were his special friends instead of his sworn enemies. He exalted himself as a Napoleon of Finance. All others would have to bow down to him.

Why he should have hungered and plotted for their financial destruction I could never make out. He was out to plunder them to their uttermost farthing, and he, poor fool, thought they would stand for it. So he arranged with the big fellows in the business to take from him bets up to a "monkey" (£500) each way, right up to the "off." They may have given him a bigger margin than that. Of course, if he did happen to get a winner at good odds he was a big winner. That things did go his way at times it is certain. He was getting information from a number of sources. He had such benefit as Donoghue's ideas gave. One or two trainers told him all they knew, and of course, he put them on the odds. He was certainly not a mean man when things were going well.

But the bookmakers in the end will beat any big backer like James White was. They had to be patient, and their bank had to stand up to big calls when the luck was going his way. He

must have looked very often at a framed cheque on the wall of his office in the Strand, and I cannot imagine any visitor being allowed to leave without having his attention drawn to the time when he made a firm of bookmakers send him a cheque for something like £50,000 as the result of one week's work. The sight of it to him was beautiful to behold. It thrilled him as the evidence of a triumphant achievement, and his vanity kept telling him that what he had done he would do again and perhaps every week. It never occurred to him that the bookmakers could ever be bankrupt if he got his way, and that he would leave no more money in circulation for betting as between bookmaker and backer. Then, indeed, the Turf world would cease to revolve. And Jimmy White would have brought about the devastation of his enemies.

I fancy that cheque on the wall represented his winnings, or part of them, when Bracket, ridden by Steve Donoghue, won the Cesarewitch. What he would have won had Square Measure, also Donoghue's mount and said to have been unbeatable, gone on to win the Cambridgeshire goodness knows. He stood to win a fabulous amount in doubles, and the frantic "covering" on the part of the bookmakers, who were standing the liabilities, would have caused Mr. Reid Walker's horse to start at an incredibly short price. However, there developed a national coal strike, threatening chaos, and racing for the time being had to close down because the Government proscribed transport. If White had foreseen it I really believe he would have made some attempt at bringing about a settlement in time for the Cambridgeshire to be run.

Three of his trainers were Harry Cottrill, Martin Hartigan, and Laing Ward, not altogether but in succession. I am quite sure he had a genuine liking for Cottrill. They met on level terms, though perhaps I should say that this trainer never permitted himself to come down to the other's social level. The owner was vain and self-opinionated. He thought he knew all there was to know about racing, and really he knew very little. He liked to be told what he wanted to know.

Martin Hartigan, I am sure, did not pander to him in this way, indeed he was much too diffident and cautious for the super-sanguine owner. Cottrill in that respect suited him ever so much better. They had something in common in that respect, and, after all, the trainer had been right on more than

one big occasion. I expect he could have had the earth at one time, so to say. For with that grand chestnut horse, Irish Elegance, he won for White the Royal Hunt Cup, and, later, the Portland Handicap at Doncaster. He won the Cesarewitch in 1919 with Ivanhoe and the Lincolnshire Handicap with Granely. All these horses Cottrill had bought for him, so that James White told himself that owning racehorses was the finest thing in the world. It was not possible for him to go wrong.

I mentioned the day when North Waltham won for him the Manchester Cup. How he came to get possession of that horse and have him win the Cup in his colours was typical of how he got his own way. Harry Cottrill owned North Waltham. He bought the horse for £1000 when seeing possibilities in him. He knew that James White would be after him if the horse was as good as he believed. It was for him to open his mouth very wide when asked to put a price on him. To-day we might have thought him hard, but it was to be remembered he was doing business with an exceptional man.

North Waltham won four races and Cottrill thought him well handicapped for the Manchester Cup and so, of course, fancied him. Now you can understand that White, being a Rochdale man, wanted to win such an important race in the county. If he could do that, win a lot of money for himself—what he called a “bundle”—and have all his friends “on” so that the bookmakers would be “fair rattled,” then life, indeed, would be very good and sweet for him.

It was the night before the race, and White got on the telephone with his trainer. He offered £3000 for North Waltham, Cottrill stuck out for £5000 plus the stake which was worth £2530. “Look here,” said J.W., “I’ll give you £4000, and you can have all he wins now and at any time.” “Right,” said Cottrill, “that suits me. It’s a bargain.”

The contingency was duly registered with Messrs. Weatherbys, as all contingencies must be. North Waltham won the next day. He continued to win. Then White said he must have the horse entirely on his own and intended to have it. The shrewd other party who had said “It’s a bargain” reminded his owner of the contingency. “That be bothered,” was all he said, or words to that effect. Perhaps it was not “bothered” after all. Finally he gave Cottrill another £2000 to have the



contingency cancelled. The trainer once admitted to me that he cleared something like £14,000 over North Waltham.

There were, of course, reasons satisfactory to Harry Cottrell why he ceased to train for him. I am quite sure it was he who made the first move because at the time I know White begged him to continue and again he did so at a later stage. Shall I say he had been particularly trying to the trainer? He certainly could be if he liked.

My mind goes back to a night and early morning in 1920. The house was King Edward Place, about half a mile from the Foxhill. Not a big house by any means, but one that had been extremely habitable for James White and any cronies and special ladies that made up his week-end parties. Two very special bathrooms had been installed, things of flawless porcelain, glittering chromium plate, and rich-looking marble. Years later the retired Manton trainer, Alec Taylor, once told me in awed tones how he had had the use of one of those bathrooms. The very fact of having seen such a thing and having taken his ablutions in them had left a deep impression on him. It seems to have been too much for his sophistry. King Edward Place had passed into the possession of the late Mr. Washington Singer and Alec Taylor was managing his horses.

The night of which I am writing was one in mid-week. He sat at the head of the table. Next to him was the late Paddy Hartigan, on whose right was his brother, Martin Hartigan. I was on his left, nearest the bell push. It was one of James White's champagne periods. They recurred. Sandwiched between would be bouts when his drinking would be restricted to milk, beer, or even water when he chose to go on the "waggon." My part, as I shall ever remember, was to obey when at strangely short intervals up to one or two in the morning he would say: "Touch t'bell will yer, Sidney?" Each time the butler ushered himself in with a fresh bottle of champagne, which was solemnly placed in front of the thirsty host, and the understanding servant silently withdrew.

Now Martin Hartigan had not long before taken up the position at Foxhill of private trainer to White. "Paddy" Hartigan was training at Ogbourne, less than a dozen miles away. He had married Norah, the daughter of George Edwardes, who at his death left Mrs. Hartigan and her two

sisters trustees and beneficiaries under his will. They were the owners of Daly's Theatre.

That night James White can be said to have bought Daly's for £200,000 and to have fairly launched himself in the role of theatre magnate. His ambitions were distinctly heading that way. If that night he made history he also began to move on a downward slide, which can be said to have brought about his tragic end, because it had been better for him if he had never sunk so much of his own money (and other people's) into a world which he really never understood, but which enormously flattered his vanity. He was going to have pretty ladies begging him for parts in musical plays, and he was going to see that they begged prettily.

"Look here, Pat," he said (he always called Paddy "Pat" and Martin "Micky"), "I'm going to make a firm offer to-night for Daly's. I'll give 'em £200,000, not a bob less, and you can tell Norah and the rest of 'em so. Mark you, it's a wonderful offer and there's to be no messing about. If I don't have an answer 'Yes' or 'No' inside of forty-eight hours then you can tell 'em it's off. Ah don't want their damned theatre."

He got his answer inside the time limit. The daughters of the late George Edwardes did the right thing that time, as they will agree. Paddy Hartigan took over the ultimatum, and I expect he underlined it a bit in his rather forceful way. I do not think the trinity of daughters were so inspired, when, years later, they turned down a firm offer of £35,000 for the stallion Stratford, a horse for whom they had given only a very few thousands in the first place to take the place of Santoi and stand at their Ballykisteen Stud in Ireland. I made the offer on behalf of Mrs. Chester Beatty. That lady seemed truly disappointed that she had failed to get the horse, for she had set her mind on having him at her Calehil Park Stud in Kent. There came a time when her chagrin turned to very sincere self-congratulation. Stratford was entering on eleven years of age. He did not see a better day. Few of his many winners as two-year-olds trained on to make such as would have justified a purchase price of £35,000 at a time when the values of bloodstock had toppled some way from their peak prices of the early and middle twenties.

Donoghue had a strange attraction for James White. And

I must say the famous jockey never hesitated to make good use of the favour in which he was held by the man who made money his god. The historian will scarcely blame him for that. He will not blame White for wanting the jockey on his side and seeing that he had him there. For, after all, Steve was top dog among jockeys for several years. A champion jockey, especially one riding at the convenient weight of about 7 st. 8 lb., is keenly sought after. He had ridden three Derby winners in succession. Humorist, Captain Cuttle, and Papyrus. A glorious Trinity which we colloquially designate the "hat trick." He was accepted as being at least seven pounds better than any other jockey at Epsom.

James White showed by his lavish generosity to the jockey that he subscribed to the view. Steve could tip to him if so minded, "mark his card," so to say. He owed it to the jockey that he won all that money over Bracket's Cesarewitch. I am sure he was well "on" his Derby winners. The man who had once been a bricklayer in Rochdale became a "plasterer" when he betted, if so inspired, either on advice or personal whim. To use his own word he just "plastered" the big starting-price men, especially the late Leo Harward, who operated in the City. Once I heard Harward declare that White could not do wrong with him and that he was bending him and would break him. White would have loved to hear that. Yet I know who won on balance, and well too! It was not the backer.

There were times when Donoghue annoyed his patron. Perhaps he forgot a promise, or an appointment, an obligation maybe. Such things have happened in his lifetime. White was the business man. Steve—well, I never knew him to allow business to worry him. Business tangles would fit into the proper slot-holes if left to themselves.

Let me relate an incident showing one of the occasions when the jockey did intrigue his patron of those days. It also throws some light on the bland and easy-going way White took his racing. At the time of which I am writing he had put the management of his horses with Major-General Sir Cecil Bingham. The trainer was Laing Ward. He seldom came on a racecourse. Donoghue that year (1925) had had the worst fall of his life. It had happened in the race for the Grand Prix de Paris at the end of June. He did not ride again until Goodwood and under circumstances which I will relate.

There was diabolical weather that year at Goodwood. Rain, dense sea mist, and heavy going almost blotted out a sight of the racing while making it bad for the horses. If you were in the vicinity of the winning post you could not make out the horses until they were almost on top of you. Certainly you could not see more than a hundred yards up the course. Such were the conditions on the Wednesday when a horse named Diapason won the Goodwood Stakes. James White's Cloudbank, ridden by Harry Wragg, was second.

Then it was that Donoghue rang up Cloudbank's owner and suggested that the horse should run on the following day for the Cup, that he would ride it and win on it. And, he added facetiously, "The horse didn't have a race to-day, you know."

"What do you mean 'didn't have a race'? He ran for the Goodwood Stakes I tell you."

"No one saw him run anyhow. They couldn't see him. I tell you I will win the Cup on him."

"But you can't ride. You're not fit," argued the owner. Then he added: "But if you say you can ride and that you'll win on him I'll come down and back him. Tell the General and Laing Ward I say he's to run again."

The next day Donoghue was just leaving the weighing-room for the parade ring when who should be there to greet him but James White.

"Hullo, Steve," he said, "do you still think we shall win?"

"Of course we shall."

"Righto, I shall go and have a couple of thousand on him. But you're sure you're all right?" he inquired anxiously again as he moved off.

"Never felt better," replied the jockey, who a few moments before had just been strapped up by Mr. F. Romer.

Cloudbank's owner paused before going into Tattersalls to look in the private luncheon-room occupied by Mr. Sol Joel. "Good heavens," said S.B.J., "what's brought you here?"

"I've come to see Cloudbank win this Cup."

"Cloudbank? Why he ran yesterday. He can't run again and win. Don't be a fool. Come and have some lunch."

"I tell you he didn't run. Steve said he didn't," argued J.W.

"Steve?" exclaimed Solly. "Why he's only got one arm anyhow. How can he ride? Have a drink."

The champagne was passed round. They went on talking. The time passed. James White had evidently forgotten all about Cloudbank, the Cup, and such a thing as racing. Then in came Mr. Jack Joel, and, seeing White, he met him with this greeting:

"Hullo, Jimmy. Congratulations! You've won the Cup, you know."

Jimmy, I am told, looked as though he was not quite sure what was being said to him. Then Solly interposed with:

"Don't mind what he says. He's pulling your leg."

Then in came Mrs. Joel to add her congratulations. The truth was at last realised. Cloudbank had won the Cup true enough, but his owner had forgotten all about his resolve to have £2000 on. The starting price was 10 to 1. He had missed winning £20,000! I shall not say his heart was broken. For he took the Cup back with him to London, and on the way he and Donoghue filled it with champagne and emptied it.

All jockeys have their bad runs, no matter how high up the tree they may be in merit and achievement. I remember that in 1919 Donoghue, of whom I have been writing, had ridden close on fifty consecutive losers. What I have to tell now has some connection with James White, whose horses at the time were being trained by Harry Cottrill. On the first day of a Wolverhampton meeting in June Donoghue had to ride a two-year-old belonging to Mr. White that looked a certainty on its form and was bound to start at odds on. He was told before he mounted that the filly had had sore shins, but that, in the opinion of the "vet," she was now all right and fit to have her race.

On the way to the post she nearly fell down with him, and on getting there the jockey dismounted and found that she would not let him run his hand down the shin-bones. He consulted the starter, pointing out that she was a hot favourite with a lot of public money on her. Actually her starting price was 9 to 4 on. The upshot was that he decided not to withdraw her. She could not gallop and was beaten four lengths. Donoghue was very angry, and had something to say when he got back.

The next day he rode a horse named Southwell, favourite,

at 11 to 4 on, for a minor event. It was trained at Kingsclere, but the trainer, the late William Waugh, was not present. On the way to the post this long odds on favourite rolled about like a drunken man, once nearly lurching over the rails. "What on earth's the matter with this one?" thought the jockey. "Here I am on another odds-on chance without a hope." He was beaten, of course, finishing a hundred yards behind. The horse rolled about like a drunken sailor.

On returning to the paddock he asked the lad in charge if there had been anything wrong with the horse. "Yes," he said, "I ought to have told you. I wish I had now, because then you would have said he shouldn't run. When I went to him this morning I found his box full of gas and he looked bad. He'd bitten off the end of the gas jet!"

Now those were two pretty happenings to tack on to the long losing sequence. Donoghue has told me that he crept into an empty compartment of a train bound for Manchester feeling very miserable. He buried himself behind an evening newspaper.

Just as the train was starting some of the racing "lads" filled up the compartment. Their conversation turned to Donoghue. He listened, he had to, to their very candid views about him, and what ought to be his end, and when, if they had their way. He buried himself still deeper behind the friendly paper. At last one of them propounded this theory as to how he was stopping these favourites and especially the odds-on chances: "What he does is this," explained this worthy. "He squeezes them so tight with his knees as to choke them!"

The next morning at breakfast in the Midland Hotel at Manchester he sat alone at a table. Across the room he noticed James White and his trainer, Harry Cottrill. The jockey was called over and the first thing he did was to apologise to the trainer for any loss of temper he had shown on coming back on the beaten two-year-old with the sore shins.

"I don't know what the hell you two are talking about," exclaimed James White. "Forget about it. Never bother about what's past. You ride me three winners at the meeting, Steve, and I'll give you a thousand pounds."

His first ride in the colours was a winning one. His second winner was Ivanhoe, who later that year won the Cesarewitch. The third was Sans Atout at 10 to 1, which J.W. forgot to back.

He was doing something else. The fourth was Irish Elegance, who on the last day of the meeting won the Salford Borough Handicap and went on the next week to win the Royal Hunt Cup at Ascot under 9 st. 11 lb., which was inclusive of a 10 lb. penalty.

So the main subject of this chapter paid up his £1000, and also paid that triumphant visit to his native Rochdale.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE TRUE STORY OF THE ZEV-PAPYRUS MATCH IN AMERICA

How the match came about—The conferences at the Savoy Hotel—The unknown farmer and the 3500-guinea yearling purchase—Papyrus and his entourage on the *Aquitania*—First impressions of Belmont Park—Our Derby winner in favour—Situation changed through rain and a muddy track—Why the Derby winner had no chance—American Turf leaders on themselves—A trip worth while.

**B**EFORE he went to the post as favourite for the St. Leger everyone knew that the Derby winner of 1923, Papyrus, was under orders to go to America. He was to leave on the Cunarder, *Aquitania*, soon after that race week at Doncaster. And he was to engage in a match under the auspices of the Westchester Racing Association on the Belmont Park track, near New York City, against a horse to be selected which would be considered worthy and representative of the breed of the racehorse in the United States. The challengers found the money. There was to be £20,000 for the winner and £5000 for the second. They had money to burn in New York in those days.

During the meeting at Doncaster I received a wire from the news editor of the *Daily Telegraph* telling me that Lord Burnham would like me to go to New York and cable a description of the race and events leading up to it. I made arrangements to follow a few days later on the *Olympic*, with Steve Donoghue, who was to ride Papyrus, as a fellow-passenger. But first I must relate how the match was brought about.

The notion was hatched in New York. It would never have been dreamed of on our side of the water. We will assume that the Westchester Racing Association wanted to boom racing and create more public interest. For it is perfectly true that the American public, as compared with the British public, have nothing like the same interest in horse racing. They

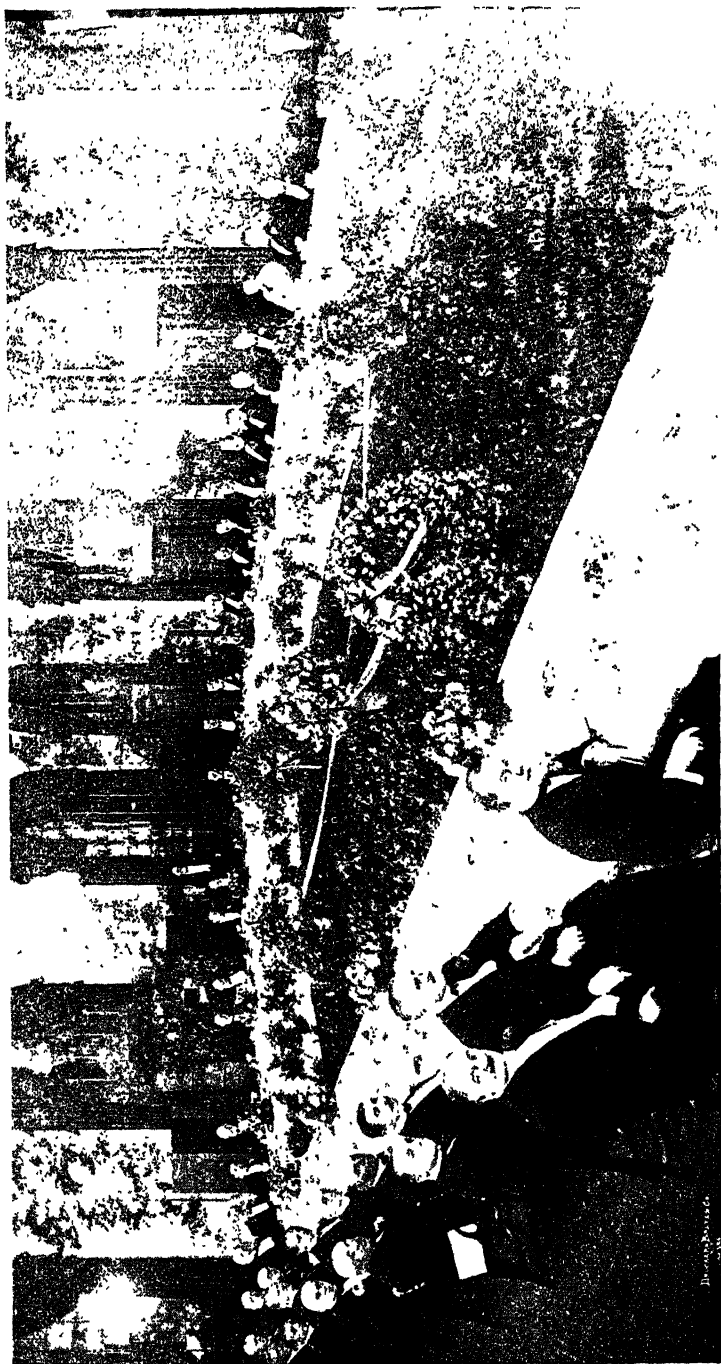


simply do not bother about it. The reason may also be simple to find. There were not then the same facilities for betting either on or off the course. At the head of the Westchester Association was the late Mr. August Belmont, a very rich man and held in the greatest respect on both sides of the Atlantic. He owned Rock Sand, who won for him the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger in 1903, and Rock Sand gave him Tracery, who won our St. Leger and was then sold to the Argentine for over £50,000, after a period of striking success at the stud in England.

With Mr. Belmont giving his blessing and his money to the proposed match it remained only to make it. The ambassador selected was a countryman, Mr. C. J. Fitzgerald, who duly arrived in London and engaged one of the best suites at the Savoy. I should say he had personality. He was also backed by the knowledge that there was a substantial bank behind him with which to iron out the difficulties as they cropped up. And there were some fairly considerable ones so that the cables were hotted up as communications passed during the days of talk and the dangling of baits in the form of inducements to get the match consummated. Mr. Fitzgerald, one could see, did not want to go back and report a failure. So he brought into play his own talents of persuasion, coaxing, some flattery perhaps, some helpful publicity from his point of view, and much patience.

First the owner of Papyrus had to agree. He was Mr. Ben Irish, a little unknown man on whom amazing good fortune had descended inside two or three years. But for Periosteum winning the Ascot Gold Cup in his colours we should never have heard of him or of Papyrus as a missionary to America. It is worth explaining why. He was a farmer making a comfortable living at Sawtry, a village I had never heard of before the entry on the Turf of the man who was to broadcast its importance. He knew Basil Jarvis, one of the three much-respected brothers who had training establishments at Newmarket. He told this trainer of his intention to buy a yearling. He was as good as his word. Periosteum was bought for three hundred guineas, a son of Radium who himself was about the last of the sons of that splendid horse Bend Or.

Well, here is the stupendous luck of the thing. Periosteum won a small mile and a half handicap at Folkestone. It was



ONE OF SEVERAL BANQUETS IN NEW YORK GIVEN TO PAPYRUS AND HIS ENTOURAGE

In this one Basil Jarvis is seen on the left of the late Major August Belmont, President of the Westchester Racing Association. Steve Donoghue can be seen on the right of Mr. J. E. Widener.



the sort of thing that an owner might reasonably hope for—a very minor race won with a three-hundred-guinea yearling. But here was an Ascot Gold Cup winner in the making. A modest farmer, who had exploited a taste for racing and race-horses, had won the premier Cup race of England at Ascot. He won several thousands of pounds in the value of the race, plus his wagers. Then he waited for the yearling sales at Doncaster in September.

I have two special memories of him. One is as I saw him with Basil Jarvis critically looking over a deep brown, almost black, yearling before it was due to enter the sale ring. It struck me that he knew what to look for. He looked for the intelligent head and eye, the truly made sound limbs and feet, for adequate size, and for possibilities of normal development. He knew that the breeding was all right. It was the colt by Tracery from Miss Mattie to be named later Papyrus. All the moneyed buyers were after the progeny of Tracery. This time Mr. Ben Irish had to sign a big cheque. He was the last bidder for the colt he had been examining. It was his for 3500 guineas.

The other memory is of him on Derby day leading in Papyrus after his victory over Lord Derby's Pharos and the rest, the victory of the little-known commoner, who had come out of the obscurity of his fields, over the important territorial Peer in Lord Derby. His rather old-fashioned top hat sat rather insecurely on a much perspiring brow. On the horse was Steve Donoghue, beaming his satisfaction in the triumph, raising his whip hand and touching his cap in acknowledgment of the cheers and cries of his hero worshippers. It was, indeed, a popular victory, accepted by the winning owner with most marked modesty. He was a little gentleman and many much admired him that day. Lord Derby shook him warmly by the hand. The King was not well enough to be present at Epsom, but the next morning the little man was honoured by a command to attend at Buckingham Palace and personally receive His Majesty's congratulations.

I come back now to the Savoy in the early days of September. Mr. Irish brought his solicitor into the business to conduct negotiations from his angle. He was Mr. I. Whitsed, of Peterborough. Mr. Irish had given his consent because it had been impressed upon him, especially by the ambassador

from New York, that he would be doing a most sporting thing and would make English sportsmen well thought of by the American nation. He could not resist any longer after that. But there was the not unimportant detail of securing Donoghue. He would have to be released by one or two owners for the period during which he would be absent; he would have to be compensated for loss of riding fees, and, of course, paid well for accepting the ride.

Mr. Fitzgerald was happy when he bagged Donoghue as a certain starter for America. His countrymen would then be assured that in addition to having the Derby winner at Belmont Park they would have associated with him the champion jockey, one who, with the help of Papyrus, had now ridden three Derby winners in succession. What his remuneration was I do not quite know. It would be at least £3000. Then there had to be a veterinary surgeon as a necessary part of the Papyrus entourage. The late Mr. V. Pride-Jones of Newmarket, a special friend of Basil Jarvis, was chosen. The trainer, of course, had to go, but Mr. Irish had to decline. His heart was bothering him, and when he consulted a doctor he was told it would be better if he avoided the two Atlantic crossings and the inevitable excitements of the race and the strain of the hospitality of which he would be the chief recipient. So his solicitor understudied him. It was a new role for one who practised as a family solicitor in a quiet way in Peterborough. I have no doubt he thoroughly enjoyed the sensations of being fêted and dined. He had a rollicking time in a world entirely new to him.

There were the considerable expenses in respect of the conveyance of the precious horse in a roomy and specially padded box on the ship. He must have two or three attendants, including one to be on his back at exercise when he got there, and special fodder from Newmarket. It will be understood, therefore, that Mr. Belmont and his fellow-organisers had to pull out considerably more than the actual prize money of £25,000. However, off they went on the 22nd of September, to return the day before the Cambridgeshire, won by Verdict at the end of October. You will be able to estimate from that how long our Derby winner had to get into trim for the race on October 20th, including the crossing, during which, of course, he never left his box. In another box on the

ship was his workaday companion, a horse named Bar of Gold.

Steve Donoghue and I left on the *Olympic*. Also on that ship were the late Eleanor Viscountess Torrington, and the late Mr. Harry Homer, then chairman of the Eccentric Club, and who, though well over eighty years of age, was making the trip to see the race. About that time Lady Torrington and Donoghue were much interested in a breeding stud which the former was running at Shrewton in Wiltshire. There, also, the lady managed a racing stable. Neither stud nor stable prospered, but both were given every chance at the time though the maintenance of them must have been absorbing a mint of money.

We had not been in New York long before the newspapers wanted Donoghue to write articles (or perhaps I should say to lend his name to them) about the Match. I can scarcely remember Steve ever being rude to anyone. Rather has he taken all comers at their valuation instead of what should at times have been his valuation of them. He would much rather get rid of a visitor by showing affability rather than necessary firmness. Anyhow, the *New York World*, through its editor, Herbert Bayard Swope, a forceful and loquacious personality who later left journalism to make a name and much money, it is said, for himself in finance, got into touch with the jockey. In 1923 he was a big man in the newspaper world of New York. My recollections are that Donoghue was not literary-minded during that hectic week.

When we arrived we were four or five days off the race. Early on the first morning we set out from the Biltmore Hotel for Belmont Park racecourse, there to find Basil Jarvis and the horse. I remember it was a very hot morning. The drive was tedious, over ill-paved roads here and there. We got out of the car and walked on to a dead flat course, oval in shape, with well graduated turns. There was a straight sprint track called a "shoot" which ran into the main course. Overlooking it was the fine range of Stands built as one vast block and on a principle which obviated obstructing supports and girders. Away on the right were the stables, which were not temporary for visiting horses but occupied for the most part by trainers and their horses as headquarters. There was also a circular training track, around which at that moment some horses, either

singly or in pairs, were "dinging" along with their riders, chiefly coloured boys, crouching low and with a very short hold of their reins.

American trainers, "clockers" (for the timing of gallops means everything and is understandable on this level course with the conditions of weather and going varying so little), and merely the curious who had risen early were scattered about waiting for Papyrus to do some work. They watched our arrival with the greatest interest. All eyes were on Donoghue. One who came forward and gave us a most cordial greeting was an old friend. He was that most respected American trainer, Andrew Joyner, who for some years had Mr. Harry Payne Whitney's horses at Newmarket.

We stepped on to the dirt track. Dirt in this sense means grey coloured sand in which very small stones or pebbles abound. It had been harrowed out and had a corrugated appearance lengthwise. Donoghue stooped and picked up a handful of what is the substitute there for good grass in England. He let it trickle through his fingers. He glanced at me, smiled, and said nothing. And yet he looked a lot.

Papyrus came out and Donoghue was given a leg up. The Derby winner and Bar of Gold were taken on the course and given a breezer. The next day there was to be a serious gallop and so it was to be an easy morning for him. It was good to meet Basil Jarvis again. All he had to complain of was the hospitality and kindnesses shown to him and Pride-Jones. Their trouble, apparently, was to dodge it and keep balanced. The horse, they said, was all right, that is, fairly all right. I gathered a foreleg had been giving a little worry. There was some heat in a joint and the vet was giving preventive treatment with cooling stuff and massage morning and night. He had had a good crossing on the *Aquitania* and appeared to stand it well, but then he was something of a Christian of a horse and very understanding. What he was thinking about as his old friend Donoghue met him again so far from home goodness knows. The two trotted off and then cantered. He appeared to canter all right on the "stuff."

It should be remembered that while Papyrus was there as the Derby winner he could not also claim to be the winner of the St. Leger. Lord Derby's filly *Tranquil* had beaten him by rather less than a length at Doncaster. They made excuses for

the colt, said that he was knocked about and nearly brought down, but for which he would have won. I could not say for certain. Any scrimmaging that occurred must have taken place a long way down the straight. We must agree that the horse had had a rough experience, for there were cuts on his legs and when he left the paddock he walked away what we call "feelingly." Mr. Fitzgerald who had so successfully negotiated the details of the match must have been rather disturbed at that time. The colt had not followed up his Derby triumph by winning the St. Leger as had been fully expected of him. An important member of the Jockey Club, who from the outset had viewed the match with disfavour, sent me a note in which he said : "At least if Papyrus is beaten, as I think he is sure to be, it cannot be said that his American conqueror beat the best three-year-old in this country."

The race was fixed for Saturday, the distance a mile and a half. Thursday morning came and Papyrus was brought out, with Steve up, to do the distance against the clock. Jarvis was clearly worried about the state of the going. It looked hard as a road and as dry as powder. There was a breakdown to be feared in the leg that was threatening trouble. Still the thing had to be faced now. Papyrus must be worked. He moved smoothly, with action that in no way seemed to be affected by the state of the going. Apparently our horse, so used to beautiful turf, had made no fuss about adapting himself to the strange conditions. When it was all over the "clockers" were showing excitement. The horse had done fine time. For the first time they were impressed. Andrew Joyner came up to say that Zev could not do as well and that he was now going to back Papyrus. Later in the day the English horse was favourite at a slight shade of odds on.

One of their most piquant and picturesque sporting writers, Damon Runyon, came out with this :

"Much excitement in horse circles because Papyrus, the English horse, shows a fast work-out. The handlers of Papyrus probably do not intend betting on their horse as it appears to have been an honest work-out. They might have taken a leaf from the book of certain crafty, conniving American horsemen, disguised the real speed of Papyrus, sent out lies as to the horse's condition, expressed doubt, uncertainty.

"This would have affected the betting odds, would have



given them a long price against Papyrus with a chance to make what is elegantly called a 'killing' in America. The handlers of Papyrus would do well on the American Turf. They seem too honest.

"Some Americans seem surprised to learn that Papyrus can run at all. They seem to have been under the impression that the English sent over a lizard or a beetle, instead of a race-horse. A horseman familiar with racing conditions on the other side remarked to this writer yesterday: 'I do not know whether Papyrus is the best three-year-old in England. I do not know whether Papyrus can beat Zev. But this I do know—no real bad horse can win the English Derby.'"

It will have been gathered that the name of the American challenger was Zev. There was talk of America being represented by one named My Own, the property of Admiral Grayson, but there was never much doubt about Zev being the one. He was a big stake winner and appeared to have earned on the track the right of taking on the English Derby winner. His owner I found to be a middle-aged, rather hard-faced, clean-shaven man, Mr. H. F. Sinclair. He had gained his wealth in oil. Something happened and he then dispersed his Rancocas stable which had been meeting with enormous success. His trainer, who prepared Zev for this match, was the late Sam Heldreth, the Alec Taylor of American racing.

I shall not write much about what happened at Belmont Park on the afternoon of October 20th, 1923. But certain things have to be said. They may help to clear away misconceptions even at this distance of time. On Friday evening heavy rain began to fall. There had been none for so long. I gathered it was the last thing expected just then. Yet fall it did without ceasing for ten or twelve hours on end. It altered the whole outlook. How much so I did not realise until reaching the racecourse on Saturday afternoon. There was the track showing a dark treacly colour. I described it at the time as resembling nothing so much as the bottom of a half-dried-up duck pond. A roller had been at work smoothing it out flat so that one thought now of a layer of dark French mustard. How would Papyrus like this?

Meanwhile the crowds were gathering, bands were playing here and there, the Turf Club was *en fête*, much bunting was in evidence, and one could see that the Westchester folk were out

to make the occasion spectacular and memorable. Now Andrew Joyner came up in a state of much agitation. Basil Jarvis had declined to take his advice as to special plating of Papyrus in order that the horse would be able to get a grip of the soft going. Without such grip no horse, he explained, could possibly extend himself. It would be unfair to expect him to do so. "Basil," he said, "won't do as I've told him. I think I ought to know. If his horse goes out in English shoes he hasn't a million-to-one chance. He might as well have stayed at home. He won't see the way Zev goes."

The time came for the parade race. Now Zev was favourite. It told me that Joyner had not had his way. This was what Jarvis said: "They might be right, but I can't take the risk. Papyrus has never worn such plates before. He is unused to them, and he might cut a back tendon and then I should be blamed. I've got to think of Mr. Irish and his horse."

Joyner was right to the letter. I could see, the moment Papyrus got on the track and first trotted and then cantered to the post, that he was all at sea. He would sprawl and get unbalanced the moment any pressure had to be applied. The starter was most sporting. So also was Earl Sande, America's leading jockey, who was on Zev. He showed no wish to do any jockeying at the post by which he might have got an unfair advantage. Rather did the starter, if anything, show some favour to our horse.

Actually Papyrus was first away. I then expected Donoghue to go on, but instead he steadied our horse only to find Sande ready to carry on in front. Evidently Donoghue had planned to ride a waiting race. That would have been all very well had there been no change in the state of the course and had Sande been willing to make it a slow-run affair. But that jockey could be taught nothing about pace. They put too much reliance on timing to be in the dark about that. So on went Zev to make it a strong gallop.

On the far stretch he was several lengths in front. Donoghue had now to move up his horse in all earnest and the gap was nearly closed, but only because Sande was not worrying. Coming to the last turn he set Zev alight, and this time there was to be no dallying. In vain did Donoghue ask Papyrus for more. If it was in him it could not be produced. Donoghue

had thrown in the sponge and was easing up the loser before Zev had actually reached the judge.

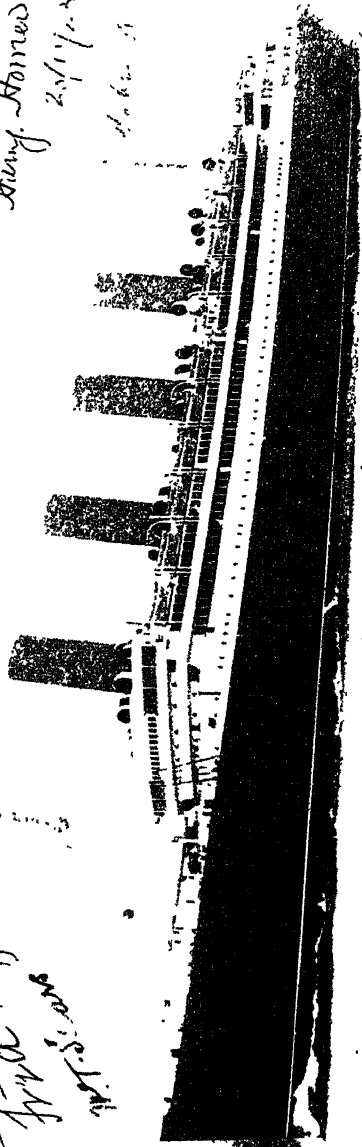
Terribly disappointing, of course, it was, not so much that he lost but that he should have lost by so much. After all, this amounted to discredit of our Derby winner. It seemed all wrong that it should be so. I hesitate now, as I hesitated then, to blame Basil Jarvis for not heeding the advice of a wise old man, Andrew Joyner, but I can state now what I thought at the time that if I had been in his place I should have taken the chance, having brought the horse across the ocean and got him to the post. Of course it was the poisonous luck that all that rain should have fallen to have produced conditions utterly strange for Papyrus. You may say it was the same for both. Admittedly so; but one feels that Zev could not have been so handicapped as our horse. Zev must have had some previous experience and then he was properly plated.

I found him to be a rather bigger horse than Papyrus, tall and loose-limbed with a short back. He was bandaged and wore white blinkers as do most American racehorses. When he first appeared in the paddock he was in a flowing hood which almost trailed on the ground. When that hood was removed I noted how he was heavily sweating about his neck and shoulders and middle-piece. He seemed tremendously keyed-up, literally oozing vitality and nervous energy. Papyrus, by comparison, was complacent and decorous.

The next day we were taken as guests to the very fine Westchester Country Club for lunch. At the foot of each chair was a bottle of Cordon Rouge in an ice bucket. Prohibition was never allowed to interfere with the after-race celebrations. The same evening the Westchester Racing Association, with Mr. August Belmont in the chair, gave a dinner at the Biltmore in honour of Mr. Whitsed (representing Mr. Irish) and Basil Jarvis. There were the owner, trainer, and jockey of Zev, and leading folk in their racing world, including Mr. Joseph Widener, who has since maintained racing stables and studs in France and England, his cousin, Mr. G. D. Widener, Mr. John Sanford, Mr. William Woodward, later the President of the New York Jockey Club, who in 1933 won our One Thousand Guineas with his English filly Brown Betty, Mr. Foxhall Keene, the late Mr. John McEntee Bowman, pro-

V. P. M. 28-10-23  
 28-10-23  
 W. P. V. Jones  
 28-10-23  
 28-10-23

Stephen Donoghue Basil Jarvis  
 Opening 28-10-23 (Papyrus)  
 Harry Homer  
 28-10-23



James D. L. Jones  
 Basil Jarvis  
 28-10-23  
 28-10-23  
 28-10-23

THE CUNARDER AQUITANIA WHICH CONVEYED PAPHOS AND HIS PARTY TO AMERICA  
 Autographed by the late Sir James Charles, the Commander; Basil Jarvis, the trainer; Steve Donoghue, the jockey, the late Mr. V. P. M. Jones,  
 the veterinary surgeon; the late Mr. Harry Homer, chairman of the Eccentric Club; and the late Mr. Ambrose Gougham.



prietor of the Biltmore and at one time much interested in racing and the Casino at Havana, the late Mr. John E. Madden, one of America's foremost breeders, and a whole lot of other big noises in the American Turf world.

There was much speaking and toasting. Both Mr. Belmont and Mr. Keene said some rather blunt things about their racecourses and methods. Mr. Keene said they were following the example of the trotting people too much by the slavish use of the clock so that horses could be made to race at an average speed. Such, he said, would never produce a great racehorse. Their courses ran in one direction or another; English courses were uphill and downhill, on going of varying kinds, so that it can be said a horse which is good here and good there is really good in himself. Mr. Belmont was sure there was a better method of discrimination in English racing. And soon after the eclipse of Papyrus on their soil we listened to the head of their racing making the confession that until they in America changed their methods the best thoroughbreds would always be in England. He further added what, of course, was never reported, but which it is pertinent to say here, that because Papyrus had been beaten in that very bad going at Belmont Park it did not follow that Zev would do the same thing to him at Ascot.

Now that was a sporting thing to say, coming as it did from the winning side. It was said at the time, and is repeated now, that the match should never have been made because it was too one-sided. No horse could be fit to take part in an international encounter that had been on an ocean voyage only three weeks before. Any reply from me cannot carry conviction in the circumstances because Papyrus never had a chance, as it turned out, on the day, quite apart from the question of fitness. I think he was fit enough if he had been good enough and able to race in the plastic stuff that was the track. For I am sure Zev would not have taken a great deal of beating. He did not strike me on looks as being a great horse by any means. If only it had been possible to send him over to England the following year and show what he could do in our Cup races, as was done with another American horse, Reigh Count! Ascot is the world's battleground for international racing, though I have little belief in there being much more of it as between England and America, I mean of the sort that arises out of

challenge and acceptance as in this case of Zev and Papyrus, or with the America's Cup races in yachting.

One of our greatest supporters of racing described the affair at Belmont Park as "ridiculous." He could not have known of the good impression made on Americans by the visit. They saw in it something sporting because of the handicap against the English horse. I look upon it as the last of such gigantic matches, not merely because of the amount of money involved, but because no owner of a Derby winner will ever be tempted again to send his horse across the Atlantic as part of a scheme to popularise racing at Belmont Park, and, if possible, start an organised series of international races.

Mr. Irish was rather unique as the owner of a Derby winner. The horse had brought him a small fortune. He had no breeding stud, and, therefore, no reason to let that aspect considerably weigh with him. His health was not good, and, indeed, he did not long survive that event. Before 1923 was out he had sold Papyrus to Mr. J. P. Hornung, who for many years has trained with Basil Jarvis. I think the price paid was something like £25,000. It was in Mr. Hornung's colours that Papyrus ran second for the Eclipse Stakes and second for the Jockey Club Stakes as a four-year-old. Then he went to the stud to command a three-hundred-guinea fee for some years and to get a fair share of winners.

Just as the *Aquitania* was taking us back home, I received a note from the New York correspondent of *The Daily Telegraph*, Mr. Percy S. Bullen, in which he said: "In a line to Lord Burnham to-day I have mentioned that quite apart from the sporting side, the cause of friendship has been helped a lot by the splendid impression created by the friends of Papyrus visiting this side of the pond. It is my opinion, speaking from twenty years' experience of this City, that all of you have done more good than any newspaper despatches in cementing the entente which is yet destined to secure the peace, and, I hope, the prosperity of our troubled world."

We were grateful for those words. They went far to make the alleged farce into something much more serious. They are the best answer to the castigation implied by the word "ridiculous."

## CHAPTER XVII

## JOCKEYS: PAST AND PRESENT CHAMPIONS

Evolution of the jockey—From the stable runabout to the finished article—Qualities essential to the making—Jockey brotherhoods—Steve Donoghue and his characteristics—A frank study—The murdered wild goose and the broken gun—Famous trainer's tribute to his genius—Gordon Richards as the master—His outstanding attributes—The will to win—The champion and Mr. Randolph Churchill.

**T**HIS is a chapter about jockeys. If the human element is dominant in all that concerns the racing of horses then jockeys can be said to dominate the element. They are second only to the horses they ride in being the vital part of the machine. By the accident of birth they supply the first qualification essential to the making of a jockey. They were born to be small in stature and well below normal in weight. Some have brains and intelligence in proportion, and no more than that. They cannot attain greatness, for accidents of that kind do not happen. Some have as much, and more, of the brains and intelligence of normal-sized men. They have the intelligence to learn from experience and the brains to profit from such learning. From time to time one of them reigns as champion.

I have never heard of a jockey coming direct from a Public School. On the other hand, although he has had some sort of education, it is because education is not only free, but compulsory. His parents answer an advertisement for an apprentice in a racing stable. They may have heard that a champion jockey with retainers, presents, and riding fees makes anything up to £15,000 a year, less income tax, of course. The boy has often and often read of the champion jockey's name in big type in the newspapers, of the scramble for his services for a big occasion, and of hysterical fêting of him when records are broken and new history made. What a perfect life, to be sure, he thinks. Such might be for him, and, after all, it will be some solace for that lack of size which shut the door on his first ambitions of becoming a policeman.



Understand, then, that his learning has been extremely limited up to the point that his application was sent off to become a tiny cog in the machinery of a racing stable. He was never destined to be a senior wrangler. The destiny shortly to be thrust upon him was to handle a skip, a broom, and a bucket, to be for ever and ever sweeping, constantly fetching and carrying, and then one morning to be given a leg-up on a quiet old cob whose job it was to follow the string up the cantering or galloping ground, carrying some spare sheets or rugs. The old dobbin had helped to launch so many stable lads, though so few jockeys, on their careers. I have seen Gordon Richards, the Fred Archer record breaker and oft-time champion, doing these things, so I know.

The little apprentice will fetch and carry for the rest of his life, even though he be photographed in his first riding breeches and pullover, if he does not begin to learn quickly. Then he must decide the question for the trainer whether jockeys are really to be manufactured and not necessarily just born. A patient trainer, one with a sympathetic and quick perception, better still if he himself has had some experience of race-riding, will shape and mould, but only if Nature has provided him with the right sort of material. Which is another way of saying that potential jockeys must also be born with the instinct in them.

Instinct! What, precisely, is that? Not mere courage and innocence of fear. The brave and the fearless would not succeed because of such virtues alone. They would not mind, rather would they revel in, the sensations of a horse carrying them at top pace, round bends, in a crowd of horses, up slight gradients and down gentle slopes. But they must also have wonderful "hands," that communication through the touch of the hands on the reins and on the bit which gives the horse confidence, tells him that the rider will never jag his poor, tender mouth, and will not try to balance on the pull on the bit, as it were, instead of in the saddle.

Balance! It is the great secret of race-riding, the chief constituent in the make-up of a front-rank jockey. Instantly it takes off the weight, or appears to do so, because it becomes equally distributed, leaving the horse loose-limbed, unfettered in action, the neck extended to its limit, and the body movement in perfect rhythm with the rider. He just feels and

knows that he is part of the horse. The beginner either can show some possession of the instinct to do the right thing in this respect or he will never do so. It is why so many pass into racing stables with high hopes and remain there because hopes go unfulfilled. They are destitute of the essentials which can never be really acquired if they are not inherent in them.

We have had jockey brotherhoods, but rarely an equal division of art and ability. The three Wragg brothers, for instance. The eldest, Harry, admittedly, leads in merit as he does in years, though he may be exceptional. Sometimes the quick success of one brother brings another into the stables and then into the public eye because the established brother pulls a string or two. Gordon Richards, however, as a star, seems to dim the capacity to shine of his brother Clifford. That may not be only for the reason that the younger brother has not a champion's ability, but because of Gordon's exceptionally lofty place in the jockey world.

Frank Wootton was a better jockey than his brother, Stanley, but the latter was an infinitely better maker of jockeys and a trainer of horses than the one-time champion could ever hope to be. There were the Loates trio of brothers in the old days. I have always understood that Tom was better than Sam, and Sam better than Ben. Kempton Cannon rode a Derby winner but he was not in the same class as his brother "Morny." There were the brothers Lester and Johnny Reiff, who came to us from America, but the elder was always fighting to keep his weight down. Joe Childs of our own day had a jockey brother, Charles, but it is the one who brought so much distinction to the King's colours who survives to-day to adorn the front rank.

Of the jockeys of my time, the best known to me, both on and off the stage, is Stephen Donoghue. The story of his life has been written. Nevertheless, another book might be written of things he left out of that autobiography. With few exceptions champions do attain popularity. Some court it and revel in it. In the end it sometimes proves too much for them. To some it comes naturally, and they are usually the ones that do not pass in a night, so to say. Donoghue's successes began to wane with the rise of the younger man, Gordon Richards. We have seen his star waning but never his popularity with the crowd, or, indeed, with all classes of race-goers. It is not

in human nature for him at fifty or so years of age to be as highly skilful as at twenty years younger. Yet as one of the little group of "veterans," he unquestionably has held his own. Among them it is surprising what a lot of the races they win.

He rode the three best horses of the war period. The only one I saw was Pommern in 1915. We may say the peak of his career was in the years when he strung together four Derby winners in five years, beginning with Humorist in 1921, and following up with Captain Cuttle and Papyrus, and with Manna after Sansovino had intervened. Obviously riches must have come easily to him at this time. The tide also receded when he sunk much money in breeding ventures. There is nothing so absorbent of money as when fortune will not smile in breeding enterprises. He gambled and lost. I have never heard him squeal about it.

Someone once remarked that Steve would get away with anything and people would still think him the best little fellow that ever got on a horse. That may seem a crude way of putting it. Yet there is a deal of truth behind what the someone meant. He might forget an important appointment, annoy an owner who had paid him a substantial retainer by trying to beg off riding a horse so that he might accept the offer of the ride on a very much fancied one. Because he had so many friends, and those other people, who, by artifice and every trick of their trade, placed themselves in his path, he has possibly been held responsible for spoiling the market of the owner and trainer who were employing him. I know of times when he has been most wrongly held guilty. And ruptures have followed and then healings, and sometime later, it may have been years, he has ridden for old enemies again.

I have seen him indignant and terribly hurt by what he has felt to be gross injustice and want of fair play. The public have not seen him in such moments. They have soon passed. His indignation had no roots to it and never spoiled his kindly nature. The public, and especially the Epsom public, loved him for the dash and bravery he showed, the chances he would take at an age when most men would have lost their nerve, especially after the ups and downs he had gone through, and then the true artistry of his finishes. I am sure it is not understood how completely he flung himself into the maelstrom when the fight would surge in the five and six furlong races at

Epsom, Brighton and Chester, all courses bringing reward to the exponents of dash, brilliance, and quick thinking.

See him leave the gate at Epsom. He would never be jerked back through the shock of the quick-starting horse. He anticipated this and was leaning low and forward, giving his horse instant opportunity to get balanced, then letting it race down the hill while he sat motionless, knowing that to stir would be to unbalance, never pushing with his hands, while he knew the horse was extended to its limits, and then the rhythmical finish. Charles Morton, who trained with so much distinction for Mr. J. B. Joel, used to say of Donoghue : "Oh, he's in a class by himself. See how his horses are balanced right from the jump off. He does it every time ; the others sometimes, and then by accident. See how horses run for him." The words might have been most appropriately applied in later years to Gordon Richards, who has admitted that part of his education was founded on a close study of Steve, his style, and his methods. They were there for all to copy.

So, whatever private disagreements may ever have occurred, there has ever been complete harmony between Donoghue and the great crowds. Let me relate a true incident showing how with his worshippers he could do no wrong, or, at any rate, receive smiling and instant forgiveness. One day, years ago, we went forth on a wild goose shooting expedition on the slobes of Wexford in Ireland. He was lent a valuable gun by an admiring host, Mr. Michael O'Connor. It was suggested that if we took up strategical positions in a lane we might get a few of the big birds as they occasionally flew over within killing range. Steve had tried stalking the elusive quarry, and had a still empty bag. On the other hand, he had a very full desire not to return without a couple or more, which would save any admission of defeat on his part.

I heard a lot of ammunition being let off in the direction in which I knew him to be. It was impossible there could be another wild goose in that part of Ireland. Useless, therefore, for me to stay in my "hide." So I moved down the line to arrive at a gateway, around which was a great sprinkling of feathers and splashes of blood. Obviously there had been some slaughter going on here. But where was our champion jockey ? Soon he appeared from the region of a deep ditch. On his face there was that odd expression in which was mixed

triumph, apology, and fearfulness. He looked like a small boy who did not know whether he was going to be smacked or highly commended. In his right hand was the most bloody-looking goose one could ever look upon. In his left he carried what had been a gun, that is to say, the butt broken off behind the hammers and the barrels.

I looked at the massacred bird, at the wreckage of the gun, and then into his guilty face. He put on that disarming smile which has turned away much wrath in its time.

"Well, what's happened? Go on; out with the story."

"It's like this," and he was going to tell me the story of his life, when I pulled him up and reminded him of what had once been a gun.

"I hit a goose," he said, "and it dropped into that ditch. I went to pick it out and it tried to bite me. I got hold of it and then knew it had to be properly knocked out. I tried to hit it on the head with the butt of the gun which I was holding with the barrels. Every time I hit at it the beast ducked its head, and I got so wild that I made a proper dart at it. And then the butt hit the ground instead of the bird. It broke."

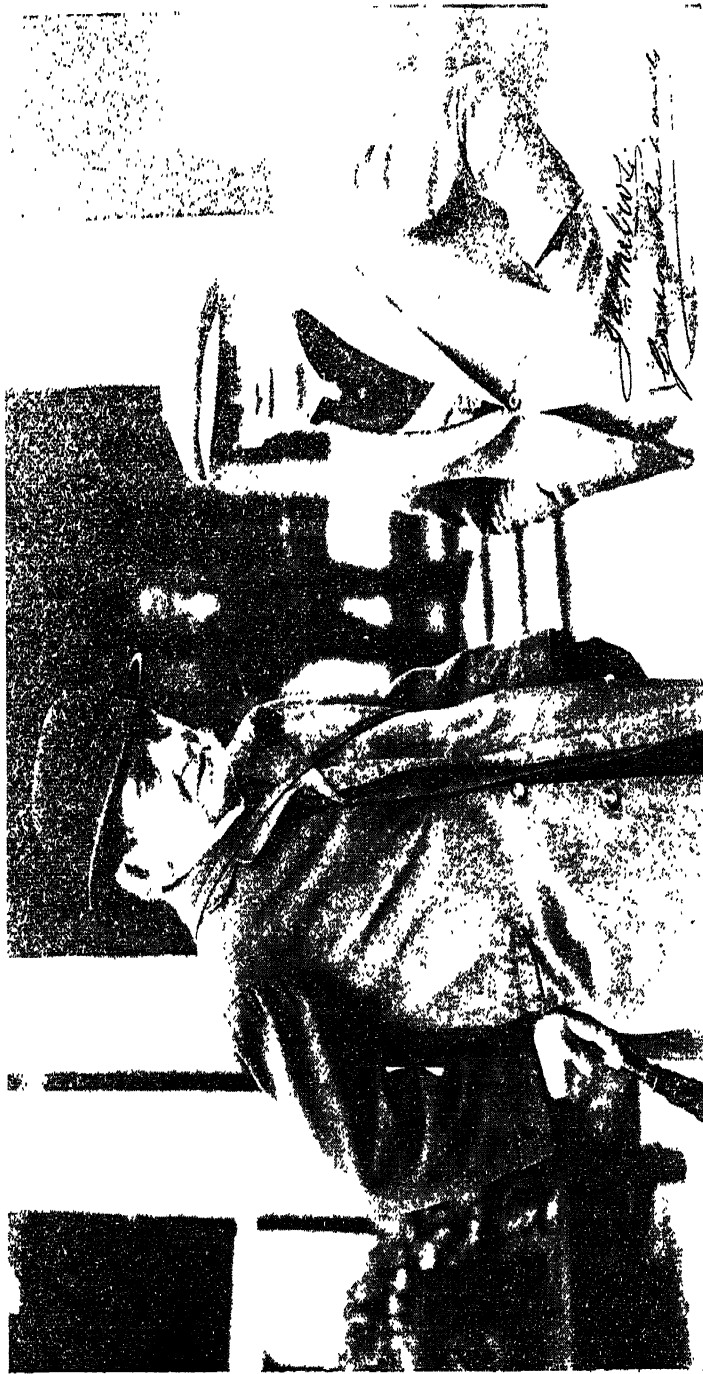
"Well," I said, "you're for it now. You'll be murdered, and so far from home too. That was a fifty-pound gun. I wouldn't be in your shoes for anything."

Later: "I'm sorry," he began, when he met the host, "but I'm afraid I've done in your gun."

"Oh, that's all right, Steve. Don't worry about a trifle like that. That's all right."

The champion jockey of that day looked wistfully round at me as much as to say that such kindness was so entirely undeserved.

In another chapter I have told of our visit to New York with the Derby winner Papyrus. I omitted to say that he made the occasion a suitable one for showing us that he was not a born sailor as well as a jockey. One evening on the *Olympic* the late Mr. Harry Homer, then chairman of the Eccentric Club, and eighty years or so of age, said he would like to give us a little dinner in the Ritz Restaurant of the liner about nine o'clock. There was very definitely a big Atlantic swell running, but our host had arranged for some petite marmite soup, some partridges, and a *crêpe suzette*. The first thing Steve did was to pass over backwards as his chair responded to a particularly



ON THIS DAY, AUGUST 29TH, 1928, GORDON RICHARDS RODE HIS HUNDRETH WINNER  
OF THE SEASON

The late Mr. James Melrose, chairman of York Race Committee, was 100 years old that month. They were photographed together outside the weighing-room at York—a centenarian and a centurion.



vicious roll in his direction. Stewards rushed to help up one who was *en route* to keep an appointment with Papyrus. Once more he was placed in his chair, and he took a long look at the petite marmite soup. It was enough. He had hardly time to ask us to excuse him.

Yet he has done lots of travelling in his time. India, South Africa, all parts of Europe (though not necessarily to get on a horse), the West Indies, while the other day we just missed meeting in beautiful Rio de Janeiro. He has told us that the best race he ever rode at Epsom, which, of course, is saying a lot, was when he won the Derby on Humorist. That horse was just one of his chance mount Derby winners. Charles Morton and Mr. Joel were desperately anxious to get him to ride the horse, but he was under retainer to Lord Derby, who had a horse engaged and was proposing to let it go to the post. Donoghue, of course, wanted to be on Humorist, not only because it had much the better chance, but for the reason that there would be more money to follow on a win for Mr. Joel's horse.

As a matter of fact he says he got less for that win than he received over the successes of Captain Cuttle, Papyrus, and Manna. It was Mr. James White who let him off riding Norseman to accept Lord Woolavington's tempting terms to ride Captain Cuttle. That, by the way, was not settled until the week-end before the race. Donoghue had never been on the horse, but in order that they might be acquainted he went by aeroplane to Beckhampton downs on the Monday morning to ride the colt in a three-parts speed gallop of a mile or so. Between that moment and the race I can imagine James White going in for a big win, as well as all others of the big betting followers of the champion jockey of that day.

Papyrus can be said to have been a chance ride in the sense that the colt belonged to a stable which had no retainer on the jockey. But the terms were handsome. He was riding for Fred Darling and Beckhampton when Manna came along, first to win the Two Thousand Guineas and then to be a pretty good thing for the Derby. Again the reward was good. Steve's star was high in the heavens about that time.

There were times when the altitude of the star was great, but, nevertheless, was obscured by cloud. For one so used to the public gaze, he deeply resented anything in the nature of



injustice. He could be very wounded then. Gossip reached his ears about his riding of Lord Glanely's Grand Parade when beaten at Newmarket as a two-year-old immediately following on a hard race in Ireland and a crossing a few days before. He did the right thing in consulting the Stewards. Again, he declined to ride He in the Cesarewitch for Lord Glanely in 1918 after it had come to his ears that certain people not unconnected with the stable (not Lord Glanely) had made some damaging insinuations. He went to the Stewards, placed the facts before them so that they should understand why he had relinquished the ride, and then refused several other offers to ride in the race. He (the horse) was beaten a head, ridden by one who had not yet been demobilised and who had had to waste hard on the eve of the race to do the weight. Donoghue must have won easily on what should have been one of the best things ever known for a Cesarewitch.

Steve Donoghue will pass into racing history as an outstanding personality among champion jockeys of this or any other day. He was associated with such notable horses as The Tetrarch, Pommern, Gay Crusader, Humorist, Captain Cuttle, Papyrus, Manna, Cup winners of whom dear old Brown Jack is outstanding, and hosts of big handicap winners. The tenderness with which he would ride a nervous, highly-strung two-year-old, so as to impart confidence, was just a part of his own nature. He was soft-hearted to the point at times of being foolish. The plausible could always find a willing listener in him. That goodness of heart with which I think he was endowed too generously, may often have been abused. He could be so easily imposed upon, and, maybe, he has not been the best judge of his friends. He accepted them first and found out afterwards, sometimes much too late. He never denied his services in the cause of any charity. He never minded making a fool of himself on a donkey for charity's sake.

The poor and the unfortunate never begged in vain of him. His riding was a classic of its day. It set a model and a code which others have followed, none more so than the succeeding champion, Gordon Richards. I think he played the game. Sometimes, though, the game let him down. But I have seen his face illuminated with the old lights in recent days, when the public have cheered him home on a winner in the old way, acclaiming him with unmistakable affection as "Good old

Steve." Perhaps the greatest day in his life was when Royal Ascot fairly rose to him and Brown Jack, when, for the sixth year in succession, they won the Queen Alexandra Stakes of two miles and six furlongs. There had never been in history such a moving and affectionate ovation to a horse and jockey. So long as he rides his sun will never really set.

I knew Gordon Richards long before the world had ever heard of him. He was a little fellow with a mop of black hair, and he had that rolling walk which is still a characteristic of his gait as he passes from weighing room to parade ring to be given his orders and a leg up. His first sight of a racehorse was at Foxhill, where Martin Hartigan was installed as Mr. James White's private trainer. It was from there he rode his first winner in 1921, a horse called Gay Lord. I remember the horse so well because one grand morning in very late winter, when pale winter sunshine was chasing away the rime frost, Martin Hartigan and I stood contemplatively watching two horses walking in a small paddock just below the house. One was Sir Berkeley, who was fancied to win the Lincolnshire Handicap. The other was Gay Lord.

Suddenly the stillness was broken by a voice coming from the other side of the hedge. "Hi, Micky, what about some cheese and bread, an' beer and pickles? Have yer got any up at t'house? By gum, I could do wi' some."

We made out the head of James White. It was the morning after one of his late sittings, and the beer, the cheese, and the pickles were an old remedy of his to help in restoring a badly disarranged interior balance. He got what he wanted without bothering about his Lincolnshire Handicap horse or the horse which he once thought would bring off a Cesarewitch coup for him.

The next year Martin Hartigan and Gordon Richards were at Ogbourne, where the former has been ever since. He held the indentures of apprenticeship of the little man who was destined to make wonderful history. James White would have liked to have kept him at Foxhill with the trainer who took on Hartigan's job, but the apprentice must follow his master if so desired. And, by the way, nothing is more to the credit of Richards than his loyalty to his first master. When he rose in the big world of racing it was to keep intact the link that bound him with Ogbourne and to show gratitude to the man who

had trained him and made his apprentice life happy, given him the necessary chances, and who had advised him and kept him steady, if such were necessary, when so many others might have been intoxicated with success.

I can never resist an opportunity of reminding myself and others that Richards rode the third winner of his life in my colours. It was in a tin-pot race at Worcester, but it was enough to show the grit that was in him when he won by a short head, beating the very senior jockey, Fred Lane, on the second, after a great finish. Let me pass on and try to give the reader some impressions of his riding. In the first place he has had the right horses to ride. The greater his progress the more demand there has been for his services, so that it can be taken for granted that any of half a dozen of his contemporaries could have won on them. But the point is that he has at times won when one has felt that no one else might have done so. Also, one has gained the impression that indomitable perseverance and iron determination have enabled him to lose fewer races than he should have won than any other.

It is all very well to say that anyone could win on an outstanding horse, but it does not at all follow. The horse has to win, and to do so it must get off at least equally as well as others, and, having done so, interference from tired rolling horses must be avoided and the right position taken up at the critical place in the race. So alertness at the start, quick thinking, and rapidly formed judgment are called for.

Gordon Richards can almost be guaranteed to get well away. It is amazing that this should be so. Why? Starters do not show him favour. He does not seek to take advantage of them, and by rushing in from behind, spoil their starts. Watch him closely at the start. See him alert and eager, with elbows uplifted and reins held high. He throws quick glances ahead, from left to right, to decide for himself if the moment is at hand, but scarcely ever does he take an eye off the starter on his raised platform. He is watching the hand which is on the lever that releases the barrier and will send it up and outwards.

If the hand is hidden by a shield he must keep his eyes on the shoulder, for he knows when that is depressed that the signal has been given. His horse which he has been keeping on the move, turning perhaps this way and that, is straightened and away. Richards is going with him, as has been explained

with Donoghue. The horse suffers no involuntary check as with the rider thrown back by the shock of the start and who must then get back into position. Instantly he is racing, because he and his horse are balanced. It is then that the jockey can take up the position he wants. He is well away. He has not lost vitally important ground, which somehow must be made up if the luck of the race, and the pace, will allow.

See him come to the distance, menaced by one running strongly on his right, another running wide that is nothing like done with. Now he is urging, not so much to ask for more, but so that the horse will maintain what he is doing and not weaken. His whip comes into play with a movement which makes so many onlookers think he must be hitting very hard and often. But if they watch closely and note the whirl of the whip, they will see that such cannot possibly be the case. There are two flourishes to one stride. Now you cannot possibly hit a horse down the quarter more than once in a stride. The jockey's arms must move with the stride, if balance is to be maintained. The jockey who hits his horse must perform the urge forward with the whip arm before it is brought into play again for further application. Richards in using his left arm on a loose rein as an urge and sitting low, but slightly askew, is doing that double flourish and seldom actually hitting, because he knows the horse is doing his best and cannot do more. He is content if it will keep on doing its best with the winning post drawing so near.

It is important this should be made clear about the riding of the present-day champion, because there is such a fog of misunderstanding and misconception about it. Perhaps the methods I have described is why the artistry of his riding has been questioned. Donoghue is a whip shaker, but without the vigour and menacing gesticulation of his successor. Harry Wragg is another who has no use for the *fortiter in re* methods if they can possibly be avoided.

Let me go back to Richards at the starting post at Chepstow. He had ridden every winner following the last winner at the meeting that had just preceded it. They were at the post for the last race, making the twelfth at the meeting. Ray, who was riding in this race, called to the starter, Major Kenneth Robertson, assuming, I am told, a tone of mock depression.

"Well, Major," he said, "it's up to you now. If we're to beat him, you've got to leave him."

"Now, jockeys," rejoined the official from his platform, affecting a blend of gravity and sympathy, "I shouldn't give in if I were you. Keep on trying."

Away they went, with Richards bursting out of the gate on a horse named Eagleray. It was a hot favourite, of course. And it did not win. It was beaten a head and a neck by a couple of outsiders. It stopped him from riding every winner at the two-day meeting, but he had nevertheless put up a winning sequence of twelve, counting the odd one I have mentioned.

I have a delightful story to tell of an incident which happened soon afterwards at Newmarket when, of course, his triumphs and his progress towards smashing the Archer record were the talk of everyone and in the shop window of every newspaper. You can believe it because it was told to me by the jockey himself.

As he was passing from the weighing room to the parade ring to take his next ride, an entire stranger accosted him and asked if he could have a word or two with him. Gordon looked reprovingly at him, told him that he must not do that sort of thing, that he did not know him, and that it was not his custom to speak with strangers. In fact, such things were not done. And he passed on in that confident rolling walk of his to the parade ring. He won the last race and was in the dressing room, changing, when a message was brought to him to say that Lady Stanley would like a word or two with him outside, if he could spare a moment. Hastily throwing on a coat he went out to be met with this greeting from Lady Stanley:

"Oh, Gordon," she said, "I want to introduce you to Mr. Randolph Churchill." Glancing at the nice man with her, the jockey recognised the stranger who had waylaid him in the paddock. They shook hands, and Gordon invited him into the dressing room, where they could talk while he was dressing.

The next morning there was a charming article by Mr. Randolph Churchill in the *Daily Mail* of a talk with Gordon Richards. Lady Stanley was most gracefully referred to as having effected their introduction. The writer of the article said nice things about Gordon, and he in turn told me he found the writer to be a very nice man. A very nice story and perfectly true story in fact!

## CHAPTER XVIII

## MORE ABOUT JOCKEYS—STARTING

Joe Childs: his keen judgment and great strength—Harry Wragg: concentration and clear thinking—Unique orders from James White—Weston for dash and perfect “hands”—Michael Beary: stylist, self-confident, and “politician”—Fox for all-round ability—Carslake: strong and forceful—Perryman: cool, sound, and consistent—Early starting-gate criticism—Present-day starting.

THE King's jockey for a number of years has been Joe Childs, who takes his place as the veteran of the veterans. Yet while he rides with the experience of many years, his mind and body retain the freshness of youth with astonishing zest. It is often said and written of this or that jockey, by way of ladling out praise, that “he knows where the winning post is.” I can say quite honestly that I know of no rider in my time to whom this may be more accurately and truthfully applied. He has, of course, in a remarkable degree the ability to measure his distance for challenging purposes, and then fitting it to what he believes is still in his horse. You can sometimes see him coming. He is bearing down on the leaders after a longish race, not with a storming rush, but gaining at every stride, so that the accumulated gain will bring its reward in the last stride or two. There is such power in his driving. You feel that his horse must be stretched to the maximum of its stride. By way of illustration my mind goes back to his win of the Duke of York Handicap at Kempton Park in 1933, on Limelight, in the King's colours; on the same horse again at Ascot, in the same year, when the prize won was the Hardwicke Stakes, and in those two Gold Cup races at Ascot won by Trimdon.

He did not like being bumped in the last stages of a race. Woe to the jockey whom he held responsible in the pulling-up moments or in the dressing room. Then the blaze of his anger would die down as rapidly as it fired up. He purposely would come on the outside of a field round a bend because he believed

that by doing so he ran so much less risk of being bumped. A bump to a balanced horse in which, however, there is little in reserve will, he argued, do much more damage and lose more ground than anything conceded through coming round the bunch at the bend. The temper of some people is meant to strike terror into those who have given offence. I have seen Childs simply furious and livid with rage and amazingly calm soon afterwards. His brother jockeys know him too well to be frightened. Rather do they laugh. Maybe it is something that has happened in a race: it may be a grievance against the starter: or the alleged blindness of the judge. I have said that it soon passes, almost as quickly as smoke in a wind.

He will never be popular in the widest sense. That is because he is shy and shuns the limelight. It pleases him enough that his brother professionals think affectionately of "Joe" and that he has the respect of trainers. Above all, he is quietly proud of the honour which has been his for some years, that he should have been the King's jockey, and that he was the rider when His Majesty's Scuttle won the One Thousand Guineas, the first classic race to be won for King George.

Harry Wragg is a jockey for whom my admiration increases as his career extends. He has strong character, method with style, the instinct that is found only in the first-class jockey, and no other can teach him anything about balance. Above all, and perhaps more than any other, he has developed in himself a very considerable power of concentration. He applies it to the games of which he knew nothing in his youth, to acquire a skill through the will to play them. I am thinking of such as golf and lawn tennis. But he realises that his job is the riding of winners. He is helped by his ambition, which is very considerable. So he digs deeper than most into things that are not really abstruse, such as temperament, which varies so much because what suits one horse will not suit another.

He is probably the coolest and most calculating jockey that ever got on a horse in our time. Yet his brain must be alert and his judgment keyed up. His first Derby winner was Felstead in 1928. It was a result that immensely surprised us. The starting price of thirty-three to one tells its own tale. This horse had been unplaced for the Two Thousand Guineas. Yet Wragg knew before they reached the foot of Tattenham Corner that he was on an odds-on chance. The two in front

had run themselves to a standstill. Flamingo and Sunny Trace were beginning to shorten stride, and he would be able to overtake them just when he felt disposed to do so. He took a glance over his shoulder to see if any danger threatened and saw none.

"What a lovely position to be in!" he remarked to me quietly a few years later. Was Felstead a really good horse judged by Derby standards? He beat those two non-stayers. He never ran again because he could not be properly trained. I put the question to Wragg. "He was a two miler," he explained. "Really the Derby course was too short for him."

It gives me some satisfaction to relate a story of an occasion when Harry Wragg rode a heavily-backed horse in the Cesarewitch for James White. The horse was Norseman. The jockey was to get an immensely big present if he won. White was there to give his own orders and they took this form:

"You've got to ride the horse as I say, and if he loses I shall not blame you. Two jockeys are going to 'get at' you. You must come on the outside all the way."

Now Wragg knew that a horse to win a Cesarewitch must cover as little ground as possible, and that can only be done by picking your way through beaten horses when they begin to drop back, and, indeed, never to be too far away from the inside. So Wragg turned to Norseman's owner and said: "If I keep on the outside all the way I shall have no chance at all. One moment I may be outside four horses deep to the inside, the next there may be ten or a dozen."

"It can't be helped," warned James White. "It's got to be done." And he repeated the order although Wragg told him he was not afraid of the two jockeys mentioned. They would have to be on horses as good as his, and they were not.

Just before being given a leg-up on Norseman the owner gave a further warning. "Now if you ride the horse your way," he said, "and win, there'll be no present for you. But if you do as you are told and ride him my way, I shall not mind if you lose."

The jockey was in a proper quandary. "Well," he thought, "I shall get nothing if I ride him the way he ought to be ridden on this course and I win. And I shall still get nothing if I keep on the outside all the way, because he will have no chance at all."

Wragg got nothing at all. In the race he rode the horse as



he thought it should be ridden, so long as the horses were well out of the sight of the people on the stands. Turning into the straight he made to come on the outside of four. The moment the horse found himself with a clear course ahead he started to pull hard for his head. He raced sooner than Wragg wanted him to. He was spun out in the Dip to finish fourth. He must have won, thinks Wragg, had he kept him tucked in behind to come with a short run. His reserves would have been harboured.

Lord Derby's jockey, Tommy Weston, has known what it was to have a year as champion. He has ridden a whole heap of winners in his time. His apprenticeship was served in Yorkshire in a stable controlled by a bookmaker. I should say he was brought up in a hard school, which may be one reason why he finds himself so much at home in a rough house in a race, and is still well able to take care of himself. It is immensely to his credit that for so many years he has had the honour of wearing the colours of Lord Derby, and so was associated with the Derby triumphs of Sansovino and Hyperion and the St. Leger triumph of Fairway. Weston is sometimes criticised for riding an erratic race, and, perhaps, one is justified in saying that his standard is not always the same. But no one will deny the great dash that is in him or his possession of beautiful hands. One sees that in his ability to get on with all classes and sizes of the racehorse. A great sense of humour has helped him in life, as also a brusqueness which is more amusing than an indication of bad manners. So it will be understood that he has personality, but then I cannot imagine any successful jockey being entirely devoid of it.

There is no more ardent believer in Michael Beary than himself. Self-confidence, asserted within limits, may be helpful in a hard and highly competitive world. Beyond those limits there can be danger. Yet they are never very apparent to Michael Beary, or, if they are, he takes a chance. He is an unusual Irishman, though not in his knowledge of the thoroughbred, which goes much deeper than with most jockeys. If you would know anything of breeding, make and shape, and of the secrets of race-riding, by all means apply to him and they will be revealed. He is not the dove of peace and tranquillity when waters are ruffled on the Turf. One gets the notion that he never likes to be out of it if there is any ruffling

to be done. The politics of the Turf are like as a Bible is to some people. They bring him much peace of mind. He is at once the reformer and the revolutionist.

As a rider he has style and perfect hands. He is wide-awake at the starter's end, and if he can win with seven pounds or ten pounds in hand, without letting us be aware of the fact, he would be immensely pleased. Those few pounds, he argues, might come in so very useful on another occasion. He has read of the tricks of Archer and Fordham of old and seeks to blend them. But it is not unimportant to bear in mind that races in their day were vastly differently run to the races of modern times. Then they dawdled. Now they race. So the jockey who schemes to cut things fine may one day find himself assailed when an assault is not expected. In such circumstances a horse is given a hard race when it should have had an easy one, with always the possibility of tragedy lurking.

Michael Beary has not been well served for one of such proved ability. As the Aga Khan's first jockey he could have ridden Blenheim when that horse won the Derby of 1930. He favoured riding Rustom Pasha, who was unplaced. Again, in the St. Leger of 1932, when the Aga Khan had four runners, his choice was Dastur, who, however, was beaten a neck by the stable companion, Firdaussi. Any other jockey would probably have chosen the same. Somehow other jockeys are never singled out to be the playthings of a capricious Fate. He is gifted, and at times his riding excites the greatest admiration. A hard worker with Hitler-like tendencies.

There are two veterans who for years past have held their places with wonderful consistency. They are Bernard Carslake, Australian-bred, and Fred Fox. The one is much travelled: the other nothing like so much. They have only won one Derby between them. That was when Fox in 1931 was associated with Cameronian. But both have won others of the classic races. Carslake won a St. Leger for Lord Derby on a big slab of a mare named Keysoe soon after the War. He is dependable at the start, and his judgment through a race consistently admirable, but Carslake gives onlookers their greatest thrill when it comes to a close finish, and then you see his strength exerted and used with perfect distribution.

Fox you rarely see in trouble through a race and nearing its end. Invariably he is in the right place, assuming, of course,

his horse is good enough, and I will say that horses seem to run generously for the little short-legged light-weight on top. He is essentially the jockey for the stable with lots of two-year-olds that will benefit from judicious riding in their races while having to work with a trainer who will think ahead where the older horses are concerned. If so, then Fox has much value out of the saddle in advising as to the placing of them.

For maintaining a high standard with consistency I would give a foremost place to Dick Perryman. He is absolutely sound and a fine finisher. Moreover, he has always been going one better to bring him to the position he occupies in these later days. He is seen at his best in a longish race on a horse that must first be settled down if the best in such horse is to be forthcoming. He is able to do what so very few others can do: to get a horse to go slow though given a loose rein when one sees some jockeys fighting hard with their mounts and so expending energies which cannot be forthcoming when urgently wanted later in the race.

The Jockey Club insist that apprentice riders shall not carry whips in races restricted to apprentices. Obviously, they do not wish to encourage any misuse of the weapon by inexperienced boys. I would personally prefer to see that order withdrawn. The education of a jockey cannot possibly be completed without knowledge of when and how to use the whip. It is not necessarily used to hit a horse. More often than not it is flourished to create a frightening effect, as we so often see with Donoghue, Richards, and Harry Wragg. Some horses are sluggish. They are good racehorses, nevertheless, but would not be so if confined to modern apprentice races. How often do we see in one of these affairs a boy hitting a lazy horse with the end of his reins, even with the flat of a hand? It is not very dignified. Let the apprentice who is good enough to sit on a horse at racing pace by all means carry a whip and trust to him not to abuse its use. A boy who is going to make a full-blown jockey would not be guilty of such abuse, while its aid might easily hurry on the day when he would show himself a credit to his training and experience in public.

Closely allied with race-riding in modern times is the modern method of starting. I have said that the method is modern, but only so far as it differs from the old days of effecting starts by means of a dropped flag in the hand of the starter. Really,

the advent of the "machine" happened so long ago as to make the institution quite an old one. First there was a tape stretched across the course. It was never satisfactory, though a big step forward on the old haphazard method, under which there would be, on occasions, many breaks-away and much time wasted. Why, even the great Fred Archer and his formidable contemporaries, George Fordham, Charles Wood, and others have been reprimanded for anticipating starts.

There came the time not so very long ago when the first primitive device gave way to what is in use to-day, a barrier in the completest sense of the word. My impression is that it came to England from Australia via Paris. But it had not arrived when in 1914 some old Tories of the racing world were indignantly condemning the starting of horses by means of the raising of tapes. I find it interesting now to quote from a letter, hitherto unpublished, emanating from the pen of one who throughout his life has ever been deeply respected, whether when racing in his heyday over the grass of Leicestershire, or turning, when the days had lengthened, to his beloved Newmarket. He is very old now. Because I have not permission to mention his name I must emphasise that his position, socially, and in every way, was important and that he was fully entitled to know what he was writing about. The new starting gate, as used in 1912, he cursed in fiery words. He almost seemed to see in it the end of racing. He wrote:

"Your words in denunciation of the attempted start for the Derby last week are not one whit too strong, but, realizing the cause, as you and every competent judge must do, you lack the courage to publish to the world, that 'the inevitable failure to start thirty horses on equal terms' is entirely due to a machine-made method as unnatural as it is impossible. Happily with great justice and discrimination you refrain from blaming either starter or jockeys for the disaster. Forty-seven years ago I saw Mr. Chaplin's Hermit beat twenty-nine others for the Derby of 1867. There was naturally some trouble and delay at the post, which was visited on the culprits, the jockeys Hardcastle, Payne, and Grimshaw, whom the starter reported for misconduct, and whom the Stewards promptly suspended for fourteen days. The start was good, only Mr. Savile's D'Estournel suffering. The official report reads: 'D'Estournel was left at the post'—a plain statement of fact, in striking

contrast to last week's official gloss: 'Kennymore swerved across the course at the start and lost ground.'

"He did indeed. Not a word about Brakespear and several others, who were also practically left lamenting after some of them had been badly kicked. In those days the fields were much larger than now, but for one horse left then there are nowadays ten or more placed out of action every week. In those days delays and mishaps, as a rule, were the fault of over-eager, disobedient jockeys, who were promptly reported by the starter and dealt with accordingly.

"Why are jockeys nowadays seldom or ever reported? Simply because with this starting machine it would be unfair and unjust to blame either starter or jockeys, certainly not the latter, who must risk life and limb at half-hour intervals during an afternoon, for with highly-strung animals fright soon culminates in frenzy, as in the case of Kennymore and others last week. Herbert Jones and O'Neill, the unfortunate riders of Brakespear and the favourite, are alike pre-eminent for patience, courage, resource, and delicacy of hands, and yet they were helpless.

"As for our starters they do wonders under impossible conditions, but one often ventures to wish that they could summon up courage to tell the authorities that they are at the mercy of an impossible method. In proof one has only to watch Mr. Arthur Coventry starting some fifteen or twenty three-year-olds with the flag, with perfect success and little delay, for a hurdle race under National Hunt rules in October and November, the same horses, who, under the gate, had been a week or two before giving trouble untold and resenting the necessary compulsion to bring them into line. Such a practical comparison of the two methods is indeed instructive and self-convincing. The apathy of owners is lamentable. What is everybody's business becomes nobody's business; hands are helplessly folded, and matters of moment, involving many thousands of pounds, are allowed to drift without protest or challenge."

Again in a later note, following "goings on" at the start of a big race in Paris, he wrote: "It seems to be an article of faith that nothing can or shall be done to touch this accursed 'gate.' The fatal tradition is that no member of the Jockey Club must ever dare oppose the Stewards. Alas, horses, each year, lose courage and temper in a more marked degree. The whole

truth may be summed up in one word—Fear. It used to be the aim and object of every trainer and jockey to avoid shock or upsets to temper. Nowadays everything tends to worry and frighten sensitive, highly-strung horses.”

When the decision to introduce the starting gate was arrived at Lord Durham, perhaps the greatest of our Turf reformers since Rous, may be said to have been its chief sponsor. One of its most forceful opponents was Mr. Leopold de Rothschild, who at the annual meeting of the Jockey Club prophesied that it “would very likely be the means of ruining valuable horses, possible winners of the Derby and St. Leger.” On the other hand one of the pro-gate advocates urged that “every jockey gets a fair start, the best jockey and the worst jockey are on the same footing exactly.” Only two-year-olds were started by the gate at the outset: the next year two and three-year-olds until the use became general.

It is not unamusing after twenty years or so to be reminded of the arguments advanced against the innovation. At any rate the worst has not happened. There has been no marked deterioration of the breed of the racehorse. There have been commotions and sometimes angry controversy, but then such must inevitably be recurrent. Happily the plea advanced in its favour that the best and the worst jockeys will be placed on the same footing has not been fulfilled. Thank goodness for that. But it is undeniable that the general standard of starting has been raised enormously, horses have been educated to it and would miss it now, while the public have tremendously appreciated the end of those long and terribly tedious delays under the old system.

There have been qualifying incidents. Do not let it be supposed that the human element has been made less important than it ever was. It was surely a foolish thing to urge in its favour that the best and the worst jockeys would be placed on the same footing. That would be tantamount to penalising the brainy, enterprising, and quick-thinking jockey. The stolid mind, meaning slow communication with action, would go unpenalised. Happily anything of the sort could not possibly happen.

On the whole continuity of Jockey Club policy is wonderfully well preserved, bearing in mind how panels of Stewards are for ever changing and that individuals vary as to the lengths

they are prepared to go in introducing reforms. There may be some truth in the statement of my veteran correspondent of a score of years ago that no member of the Jockey Club dare oppose the reigning Stewards. I would prefer to believe that there is a disposition now, as there ever has been, to leave things to those who have the leisure, ability, and the desire frequently to come on the Stewards' panel. In such circumstances it is not unnatural if they expect general support of their personal idea.

The general observation on continuity of policy needs qualifying where starting is concerned. One moment it is ordered that horses must be started from a standstill. Later, when it is seen how impossible such an instruction is to carry into practical effect, and how starters quietly ignore it, nothing happens. Another Senior Steward and his two colleagues wisely believe in giving the starters a fair and necessary amount of discretion.

I have never known an order of the Jockey Club received with such severe criticism. All the leading trainers (with one exception) and all the leading jockeys condemned it. The leading writers were severe. The exception was the Hon. George Lambton, who in print stoutly defended the order. He said that it would reduce nerve strain on the horses and that the jockey with steady nerve, hands, and appreciation of balance is the one who will reap most advantage from the standing start. "Any butcher boy," he said, "can defy the starter and come in at a gallop, and his are the wings that will be clipped." And he prophesied that the standing start had come to stay.

Now one of the severest critics was the Beckhampton trainer, Fred Darling, who declared that through trying to jump off from a stand there must be an alarming strain on the hocks, and especially will this be most serious in the cases of immature horses. In a letter to me he said:

"To start properly a horse must have his attention absolutely concentrated on starting. Attention cannot be concentrated when he is standing because the horse is fidgeting, mouthing at his bit, paying attention to his immediate neighbours, moving sideways, and generally having his attention taken off starting. If, on the other hand, the horse is permitted to be on the move it is natural for him then to concentrate on

jumping off. He knows he is there for the purpose of undergoing an ordeal and is strung up to the highest pitch. Failure to permit him to concentrate permits him to fidget and worry."

Really the position could not have been put better than it was by the Stockbridge trainer when he wrote:

"It is not, I think, a matter for personal opinion so much as what is best in the interests of the horses and the fair racing of them. It is a great mistake to lay down any hard and fast rule for a starter to observe. The position should be left to his discretion. If a starter is competent he knows exactly the precise moment when the gate should go up. He must be seriously handicapped if tied down by a hard and fast rule. If he is not competent the sooner another starter takes his place the better. Horses and jockeys are not automatons. There must be elasticity."

But why continue traversing that argument? It was all so very one-sided and can be said to have settled itself. The starters may have made a conscientious effort to carry out the letter of the instruction, though, after all, they were relying, as always, on securing the sort of start which would be fair and equitable. Perhaps we do not always appreciate as we should do certain circumstances that influence starting from time to time. There are jockeys like Gordon Richards, Donoghue, Harry Wragg, and others, in only slightly varying degree, notoriously efficient and who must ease the starter's job for him. There are certain others bearing quite well-known names who seem reluctant to come in. They have to be waited for up to a point.

Then it is beyond question that the horses from certain stables know the business of jumping off far better than others. Perhaps it would be discreet if I did not mention names. The jockeys know them, and one of such trainers never has the slightest difficulty in getting one of the best jockeys. He trains lots of winners year after year. Now the horses of these trainers can make a start look as if this or that jockey were receiving undue favour from the starter. Anyone behind the scenes knew that at one time the Jockey Club's starter, Captain Allison, was thought to be favouring Gordon Richards. It happened that he was winning lots of races for two of the trainers I have in mind, and the horses he rode had better knowledge of jumping off. Think of that, plus the



ability of the jockey of which I have written at some length, and it will be understood how fatuous was the notion.

The introduction of the formidable six-strand rope barrier of the present day has prevented the possibility of butcher boys defying the starter and coming in at a gallop. There can be no nonsense with this thing. Gordon Richards, Donoghue, Harry Wragg, Beary, and Joe Childs are among jockeys who I have seen flung off at one time or another because of contact with the barrier when it has remained unraised. At Ascot Donoghue received facial injuries though Brown Jack brought him back into the saddle a day or two later. Harry Wragg broke a leg on the July course at Newmarket. Now the Stewards of the Jockey Club obviously came to the conclusion that such accidents could be avoided if jockeys faithfully obeyed a solemnly-framed warning not on any account to anticipate a start. Accordingly they caused a letter to be sent to each jockey warning them of severe consequences if it be proved that they had been guilty of anticipating the start.

Anticipation! There must be more than one definition of what it means. The Jockey Club believes it to be reckless riding into the barrier by some fool who imagines the starter is going to raise it and presents him with an advantage of a few lengths. One cannot suppose for a moment that any sane rider will risk his neck or a limb by deliberately doing such a thing. We must give him credit of being deluded into the belief that the start is about to be made. In my view the essence of ideal starting must be a proper use of the instinct of anticipation. It is not peculiar to the jockeys. The starter on his platform is anticipating the right moment for action on his part. The jockeys are anticipating when their horses will be so positioned that they may reasonably think it is to be a "go."

All is anticipation. Without the exercise of it, without the alertness and tension it calls for, then, indeed, there can be no call for brains and individual effort. As I understand the Stewards' warning it must be the abuse of reasonable anticipation that is really aimed at, but in that case it might be better defined as disobedience at the post, reckless riding. Things will go on without change, for you cannot suppress the instincts of the individual with a flair for his job any more than you can instil such instincts into a mind which has no place for them and would not even recognise them.

## CHAPTER XIX

## WOMEN ON THE TURF

Lady James Douglas as breeder and owner—Three women owners of Grand National winners—Mrs. Arthur James—Mrs. Sofer Whitburn—Eleanor Viscountess Torrington and her adversities—Ambitions of Mrs. Chester Beatty—Mrs. Edward Clayton—Miss Dorothy Paget and her Grand National dinner party—Women vital to the Tote's existence.

WE know that women must, and will, be in at everything. They have certainly made no mistake where racing and the ownership of the race-horse are concerned. Their entry in the post-war years has been on such a scale as to be stupendous. Any suspicion of the word used being an exaggeration vanishes the moment one compares the post-war with the pre-war years. In the old days, which, for the sake of convenience, I will think of as being about the beginning of my time, women owners were rare. On that account they were notable. But, apart from their comparative isolation by reason only of their sex, I imagine they must have been individuals of specially strong character. There was, for instance, Caroline Duchess of Montrose, who could have been anything but a simple and amiable soul, eager and willing to be told what to do and how she should do it.

History suggests that she could be irascible, and, perhaps, unreasonable, though I see only the logic peculiar to women in that story told about her when she upbraided her jockey for not obeying orders. "I thought I told you to come away and win when you got to the distance, but you didn't do so. Why?" she is reported to have asked. "You certainly did, your grace," replied the jockey, "but I couldn't come without the horse." History does not go on to tell what the further dialogue was, but it seems to me the courageous jockey got one up there on the Duchess, who at the time raced under the *nom de course* of "Mr. Manton." Mr. Lambton has told us

that the jockey was Huxtable, after which it was not surprising to be told that "She was very capricious and changeable with regard to her jockeys—a failing not unusual in her sex."

I cannot imagine that any woman since the days of "Mr. Manton" has taken her place in the sense of having such influence and owning such notable horses both in stud and stable. Lady James Douglas in our time comes to mind, but she has been so little known in a public sense. The Duchess must have had a great personality. When her second husband, Mr. Crawford, died she carried on his famous racing stud, and, therefore, it happened that at her death there came into the market the mare Pilgrimage whose foal proved to be Jeddah, the 100 to 1 winner of the Derby in 1898. Pilgrimage's daughter, Canterbury Pilgrim, won the Oaks and in turn became the dam of those splendid "builders" in Lord Derby's stud, Chaucer and Swynford. Pilgrimage, too, was the dam of Roquelaure, who in due course produced Rock Sand to win the Two Thousand Guineas, Derby, and St. Leger in his year of 1903. Here, then, was an instance of a woman's far-reaching influence on the Turf.

There was another lady of a later date who can truthfully be designated a celebrity. Mrs. Lily Langtry was all that. In the late nineties this most remarkable woman had the racing stage practically to herself. On the Stage and in real life we know she was a raging beauty in her heyday, honoured with the friendship of King Edward, and, again, dominating by sheer gift of personality. It was under her *nom de course* of "Mr. Jersey" that she won the Ascot Gold Cup with her Australian purchase, Merman, then eight years old. Three years before the horse had won for her the Cesarewitch with only 7 st. 5 lb. up. Eleven years after Merman "Mr. Jersey" again won the Cesarewitch, this time with Yentoi, trained for her by Fred Darling, who was just then starting out on his own as a trainer.

Mrs. Langtry or Lady de Bathe, as she became, had a charming cottage with a lovely garden, very near to where her horses were trained in the time of Yentoi, at Kentford, four miles along the Bury Road, outside Newmarket. It was there one morning in summer she begged King Edward to change his mind about leaving Egerton House Stables and

taking his horses away from the training of Richard Marsh. The King yielded, though a break had been very imminent through pressure from certain individuals, who were interested in the horses going elsewhere and who happened to have His Majesty's ear. Not so very long afterwards Richard Marsh trained Minoru to win the Two Thousand Guineas and Derby in King Edward's colours.

Only one woman in my time has won a classic race. In 1919, as I have told at some length in another chapter, Lady James Douglas won the Oaks with Bayuda. I think she must be placed first on my list of women owners, because, apart from that classic success, her horse Gainsborough has been an enormous influence for good. It has been related, too, how Gainsborough won for her the Two Thousand Guineas and then the substituted races for the Derby and St. Leger in the war year of 1918, though if she had had her way and the price of the reserve had been forthcoming she would have let the horse go as a yearling in the sale ring.

If she had been a self-opinionated woman, too much a creature of caprice and impulse, she would not have had all the pleasure and great profit brought her by Gainsborough. She would not have heeded the advice of Alec Taylor although she went seeking it in the first instance. She would have parted with Gainsborough privately for a sum beyond that which was agreed upon as the reserve price. But Alec Taylor, as I have shown, dissuaded her, arguing that all buyers had had their chance when the colt was in the ring and they had not taken it. So did Gainsborough go into training and gain classic honours, to show himself outstanding in the last of the War years, and to achieve brilliant successes as a sire at the stud.

We have this lady, therefore, breeding not only her two classic winners, but a winner of the Oaks for Lord Glanely. She was the breeder of Rose of England, a filly sold to Lord Glanely as a yearling for 3100 guineas, and to win for him at Epsom in 1930. Lady James in later years has been happy enough to assist in breeding winners for other people. Perhaps she tired of owning horses in training when Alec Taylor, in whom, naturally, she had such great belief, retired from Manton into private life. I can see her now leading in Bayuda after the filly's win of the Oaks when racing got back to Epsom after the War. She showed a control of any

emotions she should have been feeling with marked success, if, indeed, such can be so described on an occasion of the kind.

A mere man could not have done better. She was then getting on in years, and with my limited understanding of such things I can only suggest that her dress in every respect was in strict accord with her facial appearance and expression. The last time I saw her was on a liner which she left at Gibraltar for a winter stay out of England. No one would have dreamed that this elderly lady was a breeder of fashionable and world-renowned bloodstock. With the splendid assistance of Gainsborough and some choice mares she has maintained the busy Harwood Stud in Berkshire, not very far from Newbury, but the racecourse, apparently, long ceased to interest her as a place of resort.

Four times has the Grand National Steeplechase been won by women. That is probably because there are many more women owners interested in a field of Grand National horses than in the classic races. It may not always be so if the invasion maintains the same rate of progress. Lady Nelson won the Grand National of 1915 with Ally Sloper. The event was not run again at Aintree until 1919. Adhering to custom, especially when Wroughton has anything to do with the winning of the Grand National, either in regard to training or riding, Lady Nelson was hostess of a big dinner party at the Adelphi Hotel the same night in Liverpool. And she would be liberal in putting the wine on the table, there would be much blowing of hunting horns, much "who-ooing," and she would see certain old Wroughtonians and others doing runs and step dances amid the multitude of glasses on the long tables. "Breakages" can never be the smallest item in the bill, proffered the next morning, to a Grand National host or hostess.

Mrs. Partridge was the second woman owner of a Grand National winner. Sprig won for her in 1927. The lady was little known to the racing world generally, which made her achievement possibly all the more notable. I think it was more than that. For she bred her good horse, which is vastly different to having it received as a present or possibly as a peace-offering from an admiring husband. Mrs. Gemmell only two years later experienced the great joy of winning the

Grand National with Gregalach. Her personal means enabled her to give 5000 guineas at auction for the horse. I should certainly expect to win a Grand National with a horse for which I had pulled out 5000 guineas, but it is one thing expecting and a vastly different thing receiving in the big lottery of the greatest of steeplechases. However, Mrs. Gemmell was duly rewarded, and in somewhat dramatic circumstances too. For the same man, Tom Leader, who had won with Sprig, had three other starters from his stable in the year that he saddled Gregalach for Mrs. Gemmell. It was the year of the record number of starters because of the mammoth size of the prize (£13,000 to the winner).

The evening before the race rain was falling steadily on a course already very heavy. In the corridor of the North Western Hotel I was called into conversation by Gregalach's former owner, Mr. T. K. Laidlaw, and Mr. Gemmell, husband of the horse's owner. They were distinctly worried about the further rainfall, and the question arose as to whether it would be wise to let the horse go to the post. I suggested that anything might happen in such conditions, and especially as there looked like being between sixty and seventy starters. Anything might happen! I should say it did. Gregalach ran and won, defeating the greatly esteemed and brilliant Easter Hero, and securing the magnificent prize of £13,000 at 100 to 1. Moreover, one cannot doubt that he was a very worthy winner, for he was second two years later with 12 st. on his back.

Who can doubt that the vogue of women in racing has developed enormously. They abound as owners. I sometimes think there are many more women in a members' enclosure than there are men. They do their own betting, and do not necessarily borrow their ideas. If they suddenly stopped going racing the Tote might as well go out of business. If they stopped betting with starting price bookmakers away from racecourses the practitioners would suffer great shrinkages in their business. Some would like to be trainers, some jockeys, if they could. They cannot, which is the only reason why they are not.

Let me first write something of women as owners. It is necessary to mention by name some of their pioneers in times which can still be described as modern. Mrs. Arthur James

takes a foremost place, not only as an owner of horses in training on the best lines, but as the breeder of such horses. Like Caroline Duchess of Montrose she found herself on the death of her husband in possession of racehorses and a breeding stud. Ever since she has maintained the interests on which Mr. Arthur James was so keen. She can say she bred a Goodwood Cup winner in Salmon Leap to join the little band of horses that in a comparatively short time won Goodwood Cups for her husband. In the last year of the War a filly of her breeding named Stonyford came in first for the New Oaks at Newmarket only to be disqualified in favour of Mr. A. W. Cox's My Dear. One cannot doubt that Mrs. James owed a great deal to the wise counsel in the mating of her mares and in the training of her horses of Mr. Lambton, who had them in his care during his long reign at Stanley House Stables.

I am inclined to name Mrs. Sofer Whitburn as the leading woman owner for many years after the War. *Noms de plume* were permitted when as "Mr. Burns" Annecy won for her the Great Metropolitan Stakes at Epsom in 1914. It was when the racing forces were reunited after the War, and racing values were booming and soaring, that she was maintaining a lot of horses in training with Harry Cottrill at Lambourne. I cannot write that she was phenomenally successful, though she won two Chester Cups with Chivalrous, and, of course, lots of minor races. It was her husband whose colours on Adam's Apple came in first for the Two Thousand Guineas of 1927, probably a very lucky horse to beat Call Boy, the Derby winner of that year. The need to retrench restricted in time the activities as an owner of this lady. I can, however, truthfully write of her colours that they were popular. The world certainly rejoiced with her when her two-year-old Drake won the Coventry Stakes at Ascot.

Eleanor Viscountess Torrington, as she was after divorcing her husband, had a complex personality of whom I may not write too frankly. Her end was tragic and one not to be dwelt on. I prefer to think of her in the years when she was struggling with some bravery, great enthusiasm, and unwavering faith and belief in herself, to breed, own, and train winners. She was not satisfied to think she could do one of these things well. She could do all three. No sacrifices were too big for

her to further her aims. She lived, worked, and spent for all three.

There is no doubt that at one time she had a comfortable fortune, bringing in several thousands a year. She had jewellery and friends. Her trouble was that racing and breeding became an obsession with her and that she was sure she had discovered the golden road to success. The greatest trouble of all was that she thought she knew all there was to know about what some intelligent men do not acquire in a lifetime and about which there is always something fresh to learn. The lady took to owning racehorses, and some luck came her way, the sort of luck that so often deludes and beckons on to disaster. Rich Gift, who had been bought for her in Ireland, won a few races, chiefly second or third-class handicaps. All Alone was a useful winner and might have won the Goodwood Cup had he not broken down in the race. Lone Knight won for her the Chester Vase. Two of those winners she determined to "make" as sires, sell or race their offspring, persuade her friends to send mares to them, and live happy ever after. She bought an expensive property at Shrewton in Wiltshire, had her private trainer, and established a stud on land which had been too starved by Nature and may have been too restricted ever to do any real good. There Rich Gift and All Alone were found homes, but alas, not many mares.

For a while things were not too bad. She found substantial patrons for the racing stable in Sir Frederick Eley and the Maharajah of Rajpipla. The latter bought a two-year-old of proved smart form named Embargo. He won the City and Suburban of 1927. Donoghue thinks he ought to have beaten Coronach for the Coronation Cup on him. The lady had won the City and Suburban of 1924 with Ulula. You will understand there were occasional encouragements—until the difficult times arrived. The sires did not get the winners expected of them. But then they had so few mares visiting them. All the time the money was going out, sinking, melting, disappearing. Money had to be raised, and you know what that means. The Shrewton dreams remained dreams. This ardent woman owner who loved horses, I am sure, who would linger in their boxes, giving them sliced carrots and other tit-bits, who would do anything for their comfort and welfare, was beaten. There was so much good in her and kindly in her nature that



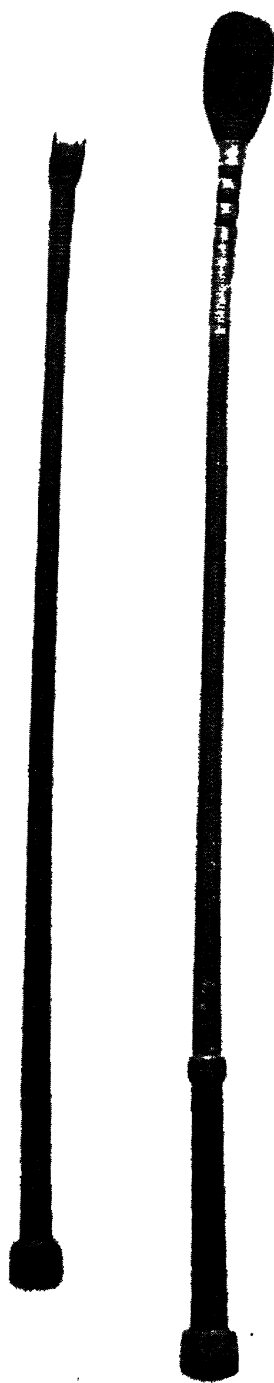
I think of her as a real lover of horses and of the good actions she did, and not of her weaknesses which combined to defeat her utterly.

Now of women owners who were also attracted by breeding I must find a foremost place for Mrs. Chester Beatty, the wife of a wealthy financier and mining engineer who though of American birth has long since been domiciled in England. The lady we have known as a breeder and an owner of considerable prominence on the Turf was his second wife. She impressed me at all times as a lady of indomitable energy, of tremendous enthusiasms, and with a lively imagination. She was minus none of feminine emotions. She was, indeed, a lively concentration of nervous energy. Whatever her ideas and her way of pursuing them she was immensely vital.

I cannot imagine what impulse brought Mrs. Beatty into racing and breeding. It cannot have been from any special encouragement received from her husband. I never thought for a moment that he was interested in the slightest in racing. He may even have disliked it. Perhaps he went racing once a year, to Ascot, which only happens once a year. His hobby was the collection of rare old manuscripts. His collection was of world renown and was of enormous value. He had an astonishing collection of beautiful snuff boxes representing the art in precious metals of East and West. What a gulf between such sedentary hobbies and ambitions to win classic races with home-bred horses!

First Mrs. Beatty laid out money, quite a lot, on the purchase of yearlings at auction. Lord Glanely and the Aga Khan began like that, you know, and they have won classic races. She sent them to a training establishment in Hampshire. Then her horses were in the care of Lord George Dundas at Newmarket. They passed on to another Newmarket trainer until the time came when their owner decided to bring home to England as her private trainer one who had been specially successful in turning out winners for her in Egypt.

I am sure there are many men who come into ownership with a confident belief that they have only to spend sufficient money on yearlings to make a certainty of winning lots of races. The majority do not do so. Luck is much too elusive to be bought. They get faint-hearted and disgruntled. Being most of them business men they show themselves "strong" by



#### TWO FAMOUS WHIPS

The upper one was carried by Steve Donoghue when he won the first of the war-time Derbys on Pommern (1915). The lower one was carried by Gordon Richards when, on November 8, 1933, at Liverpool, riding Golden King, he broke the Fred Archer record of riding 246 winners in a season. The record breaker rode 259 winners in 1933, and this whip was carried throughout. Both whips presented to and in the possession of the author.



a decision to cut losses and get out. Some women may be reluctant to get out, and, because they have not business brains, they will stay in until either their own or their husbands' resources compel them to quit. Having said so much I should certainly be wanting in tact if I proceeded at once to examine further the long list of women who have made stays in ownership of varying lengths. But of Mrs. Chester Beatty it can certainly be said that she remained undaunted in face of sharp disillusionment.

With a yearling bought at auction and which was rather ironically called Moneymaker she won a good class race for two-year-olds at Doncaster. Hopes that he might even gain classic distinction the next year were shattered quite early. He showed some lameness and he was retired. His owner, full of determination and enthusiasm, resolved to "make" him as a sire. Already she had found an adequate acreage on her husband's delightful estate of Calehill Park, near Ashford, in Kent. Most admirable brood mare boxes were built, covered barns were formed, paddocks were fenced off, and, indeed, there was established a first-class and modern stud for the breeding of thoroughbreds.

Mares were bought for mating with Moneymaker. Yearlings were bought to send into training. For a seven-year-old mare named Rosemead, by Rossendale, a sire whose stock was being little sought after by breeders, she gave at auction the fabulous price of 11,500 guineas. For a National Stud bred yearling by Tetratema from Dolabella, and, therefore, an elder sister to that flying grey Myrobella of a few seasons later, she gave at auction 11,000 guineas. If Myrobella had preceded Mrs. Beatty's yearling one could better have understood the price. Of the stud career of the one and the racing value of the other I shall say nothing. I can only congratulate Mrs. Beatty on having carried on in face of disappointments that would have dismayed most men long ago. She may have reminded herself that after Lord Beaverbrook had lost £150,000 on his brief racing and breeding ventures he sold all his possessions for what they would fetch. And among them was a yearling by Manna from a mare named Brodick Bay. The big ungainly colt was bought by Lord Rosebery for 170 guineas. He must have seen beauty in him. At any rate Miracle, as he was named, won for him the Eclipse Stakes

and ran third for the Derby, and might well have won the St. Leger but for having to be taken out of training.

Mrs. Beatty may be expecting a miracle to happen on her special behalf. When it does she will be reminded of what is constantly being brought home to all of us: that breeding tells in the long run whether on the racecourse or at the stud. Lord Rosebery's *Miracle* may have been despised by all but his buyer as a yearling. Yet his breeding was quite immaculate. I have related in another chapter how Mrs. Beatty badly wanted to pay £35,000 for the sire *Stratford*, then eleven years old, the sire of many smart two-year-olds, but of few that trained on. The incident is mentioned again to show the earnestness of this lady. Such faith in her ideals, buttressed by lavish expenditure, at least entitles her to pride of ownership of a classic winner. I would rejoice to see one in her possession.

The Marchioness Curzon of Kedleston flitted across the stage, mentored by one who has remained in ownership while she has apparently cut the painter to be interested no more. The late Lady Cunliffe-Owen shared her husband's very considerable interest in breeding and racing. I think of her, as I so often used to see her, in the enclosure at Newmarket, one of the three pretty and vivacious Little Women, inseparables until this one was taken away: Lady Cunliffe-Owen, Lady Carnarvon, and Lady Muriel Beauchamp, never far away from the rails and prepared to wager if so minded. The lady who has gone would tilt to some purpose when in the mood.

Mrs. Edward Clayton is, indeed, a leader among the foremost women in racing of the post-war era. Her husband was a member of the Jockey Club. From time to time she will have a horse or two of her own in training, but her heart and mind love chiefly the mare, the yearling, the foal, and the sires at stud. Here is a lady of pronounced personality, practical, and with a genius for making friends and claiming a great host of acquaintances. Her vivacity is of the sort which comes of her French extraction. She can be most charming and she can be blunt. I can imagine she can be the candid friend and the pungent critic. A great and inexhaustible conversationalist, an outstanding personality on the Turf among women and many men.

Fifteen years after the resumption of normal racing who

shall we say is foremost as a woman owner? Who has put most money into it? Undoubtedly Miss Dorothy Paget. She ought every year to be mopping up at least one classic race in a large and varied bag, that is, if rewards are to be measured by wealth of patronage. She is out to be the first woman to lead in the Derby winner at Epsom. I cannot see that such a history-making triumph will be much longer delayed. For she has bought of the best in the yearling market. She has bought brood mares much sought after by others with special pride in their own judgment. They have seen to it that what she secured at auction was not exactly given away. Such lavish buying had an inevitable result; she became one of the few of whom it can truthfully be written that they are what someone must have described them as ages ago—"Pillars of the Turf." I think we may concede to her that she is the first woman in history of whom this has been said.

So far Miss Paget has shown singular impartiality in her patronage of Flat Racing and National Hunt racing. How better to illustrate that than to remind ourselves that while one day she would buy the most expensive yearling at Doncaster she would another possess herself of the presumed best steeplechaser of his day and the proved best hurdler. Thus did she come to own Golden Miller, her brilliant Grand National winner, and Insurance, who achieved much distinction as a hurdler. The most expensive yearling maintained that reputation as a horse in training. It is a way expensive yearlings have.

Thrice had this lady led in her gallant Golden Miller as the winner of the Gold Cup at National Hunt meetings at Cheltenham before she lived her great moments at Aintree on the 23rd of March, 1934. The horse had conquered at the second time of asking as a public favourite. The fact of the world having won much money over him explains a lot. It is a sure way of boiling up scenes of rejoicing and enthusiasm after the winner is safely past the winning post at Aintree, with all the thirty fences safely crossed. But I am sure there is something deeper, and, perhaps, more worthy of our English sporting character. Whether the winner has won at a 100 to 1 or at the popular price of a Golden Miller, the horse that has survived the ordeal to win is sure of a cheer.

When Golden Miller made his triumphal return through

the rushing, excited crowds in the paddock he had for escort his owner upon whom many were looking for the first time. They looked at her with a mixture of envy, admiration, and wonderment—envy of the marvellous part she was filling, admiration of the determination she had shown to reach this part of her ambition, and wonderment that a woman should be aided by great wealth and be willing to use it in such a thrilling and spectacular cause. She was not dressed as the people expected a rich woman to be. A thick tweed coat with a beaver collar embraced quite tightly her ample figure. She wore a simple close-fitting hat, low-heeled shoes, and stockings worn strictly for utility. No face creams, no artificial tintings, and no lipstick. Her round, even features are somewhat pallid at all times. If she was paler than ever now who could wonder under the stress of such emotions as she was experiencing? She did not quite suggest the outdoor woman.

I had been warned that Miss Paget has no love of the Press. There is possibly exaggeration in that. At any rate, a few hours later I was privileged to be one of her guests at a celebratory dinner at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool. "Dinner is supposed to be at nine," explained her father, Lord Queenborough, "but don't be surprised if you don't get any until ten o'clock."

In the circumstances I could not be surprised. Miss Paget, I was told, paid little heed to Time. She would come when she was ready. She was dressed in a sort of crimson red, with a cape in velvet which was adjusted high both back and front. My descriptive powers of these feminine details are, I am afraid, sadly limited, but such is my vague recollection of Golden Miller's owner on the night of the victory. Her hair she wore in a bob parted down the centre and innocent of such a thing as a wave. Again I noted the entire absence of any facial scheme of decoration. Her father introduced her to those of her guests who had been bidden to the feast and to whom she had been hitherto unknown. For anyone less likely to have a wide circle of friends and acquaintances on the race-course I cannot imagine. She is naturally shy and reserved. Some people may misinterpret it, but I have no doubt it is the lady's natural manner and in no way assumed. She was a gracious hostess and clearly full of gratitude to her trainer, Basil Briscoe, and her jockey, "Gerry" Wilson. The latter at

any rate had made up his mind to celebrate now that the stress of battle was over.

Her cousin, Mr. "Jock" Whitney, with a second and two thirds in Grand Nationals as his limited gifts from Fortune, and, therefore, with a great ambition still unfulfilled, proposed the lady's health. And the lady acknowledged it—all in the space of sixty seconds or so, or a little more than a ninth of the time Golden Miller had taken to set up a new and wonderful record for the Grand National course. Our hostess remained until after midnight, and then, rather than go to her rooms via the crowded dance-floor, she preferred making a covert exit with the friendly aid of a baggage lift. It was so typical of her utter lack of ostentation and determination to shun publicity. This lady will one day lead in her first Derby winner. She will be well practised in the formality. Yet already she has succeeded in stealing every woman's thunder on the Turf, and that of most men.

Why have women come racing in such vastly greater numbers in recent years? They are expected at Ascot. They may be excused for thinking the meeting is run for them and not primarily for the horses and their owners. It is their show ground. The Totalisator came to them as their special godsend. Incidentally, the Racecourse Betting Control Board can regard women as their godsend. The Tote would languish without the interest of women. They will offend against the unwritten law of the Royal Enclosure at Ascot if they make personal contact with the bookmakers on the rails. What they may do at Newmarket, Goodwood, and indeed, anywhere else they must not do at Ascot lest great indignity befall them. The Tote saves them from their men friends and from total abstention from wagering at the royal meeting.

Certainly women in racing are favoured. Some of them are owners of racehorses. They have the means. They may also have indulgent husbands, who also need indulging! Betting attracts them so that they are the main buttress of the racecourse Tote. On an average racing day I am sure there are more women in a members' enclosure than there are men. Who can be surprised? They are getting something which costs little. A man member of the Club has two ladies' badges, always excepting Newmarket, and they are invariably in use. A woman may enjoy all the amenities of the special



enclosure, and a man who has a horse or horses running, who has spent money on their training, their entry fees, their transport, and on the services of jockeys, if he be not a member of the Club, is often kept out of it. The woman becomes of much more importance than the owner, who is providing the entertainment. She cannot realise, of course, how quite innocently she is aiding and abetting the farce of this side of racecourse administration.

There is one remaining citadel in racing woman has not yet breached. Women have not yet been admitted to membership of the Jockey Club. I cannot conceive of entry ever being forced, though I will not say it never will be. So many undreamed of things do happen. Led, say, by Mrs. Clayton, women might seek representation on the old Whig political cry of no taxation without representation. My picture, you will say, is fanciful. It may be, and yet the day may come, if not in our time, when men will be asked to receive assistance from women in the proper government of the Turf. May our old Tories long reign and prevail!

## CHAPTER XX

### WAGERS AND WAGERING: THE OLD "H.B.s" AND THE DERBY CLUB

A famous double event wager—£100,000 to £100—How it came about—And how it was very nearly won—When the bookmakers saw danger—An incident after the 1913 Derby—The bookmaker and his £20,000—Why did the Epsom trainer know? —A Derby winner nominated to win as a foal and £2000 won—Some big modern wagers—Mr. "Solly" Joel and the old "H.B." Club—First Derby Club dinner—The astounding luck of Lord Derby—And Sir Abe Bailey's "Aside!"

I HAD stayed overnight at Scarborough and called at Malton to see some of Charles Elsey's horses. It was the end of August in 1931, and York meeting was due to open that day. Continuing our journey to the Knavesmire we looked in at the Station Hotel at York. Then it was that my companion propounded a suggestion which came very near to having a tremendous sequel.

"I feel like having a proper bet," he said. Then he went on: "It's no use messing about. If you're going to have a bet, well, have a bet. Don't play at it. Do you know anyone who would lay me £100,000 to £100 against what I'm going to enter for the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire? The 'Double' I mean. You know what I've got. Six Wheeler, Leonard, and perhaps Isthmus for the long race, and Six Wheeler and Disarmament in the Cambridgeshire. What about Heathorn?" Then, lapsing into his West Riding, he added: "It's muck or nettles wi' me. Ah me, but it would be lovely to bring it off. Now wouldn't it? See what yer can do. That's a good lad."

Now this racehorse owner, who had spoken, was Mr. Herbert Fitzroy Clayton. I had known him from my early days. He had passed the span of three score years and ten. He was well on the road for four score with an amazingly active mind and sprightly body. In his lifetime his shrewd business head had made much money for him out of the West

Riding industries of woollens, chemicals, and dyes. Immersion in another industry at that moment was not continuing the good work, but neither was it daunting him or subduing his rich sense of humour, sometimes provocative, often sly. But, come fair or foul wind, he had stuck to his hobby of owning horses.

Many years ago he won the Derby Gold Cup with a horse named Mondamin. For forty or fifty years his colours of claret and gold stars had been shown without a break. Never in that lifetime had he lodged an objection or countenanced one. You can imagine what a small fortune, perhaps even a big one, he must have put into his hobby. A fine bluff old Yorkshireman he was, who pretended he did not feel it when asked to leave the private stand enclosure at Newmarket on the afternoon that his horse Disarmament won the Cambridgeshire. He was under the impression that the free admission ticket they had sent him would carry an owner into a place away from the discord of betting in Tattersalls with the motley therein encountered. I know he felt humiliated. But let me pass on.

A hundred thousand pounds against a stake of a mere hundred pounds. It seemed a lot of money. I knew H.F.C. to be unconscionably sanguine in his estimate of his own horses. A hundred pounds might not be much for him to stake. And it would not be much for the bookmaker to win. But there was a fabulous other end to the proposed wager. It was fabulous, too, for these days. The backer would be taking a chance, however infinitesimal it might seem, of bringing it off. The bookmaker, naturally, would not take it all unless he thought in his private mind that he was not likely to have to pay. I thought of the horses he was going to challenge with. Six Wheeler for the Cesarewitch? How could one put him on the map? He had won for his owner the Wokingham Stakes of six furlongs at Ascot a year or two before. He had some time later lost a Manchester Cup by a head which he ought most certainly to have won. He had been raced and raced as only a cast-iron constitutioned horse could have done. I could not believe he would win a Cesarewitch of two and a quarter miles.

Leonard made no appeal though he did afterwards win a Northumberland Plate when his vexed owner had "next to nowt" on him. Then, in regard to the Cambridgeshire, it is

true Disarmament was a very nice three-year-old of proved merit. But he also had not been kept in lavender, and he would get all he was entitled to from the handicapper. I came to the conclusion that my old friend was merely throwing away a hundred pounds, and was on the point of asking him to let me lay the bet when he insisted that I should get into touch with someone and see what could be done as the weights were due to be published the following week.

On reaching the course I wired Mr. Heathorn in London, stating the nature of Mr. Clayton's request for the big double. Maybe I suggested that he should lay it. Before racing was over I received this reply:

"Have booked double event as stated. Confirming direct. If successful he must take you and me on a world's trip. Heathorn."

The jaunty old Yorkshireman, thanks to his native wheedling way, had got what he wanted; a voucher telling him that the bookmaker had laid him the full bet. It read:

"£100,000 to £100 against you winning both the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire with either of your nominations."

Now nothing more was heard about it for a time except that news of the wager found its way into the papers. I am sure it would not come from Heathorn. If by any chance he would be forced to "cover" his brother layers would not be likely to come to his assistance by extending the odds. Rather would they contract the prices so as to make his position more difficult. The exuberant taker of the wager must have talked and been overheard. The weights came out. Six Wheeler, a six-year-old, was given 7 st. 9 lb.; Leonard, a five-year-old, 7 st. 1 lb., for the Cesarewitch. In the Cambridgeshire Disarmament had 7 st. 11 lb. Six Wheeler, also in that race, had 8 st. 1 lb. Then something nasty happened to shake up the equanimity of our friend the bookmaker. Disarmament, under a considerable weight for a three-year-old, won the Trial Handicap of a mile at Nottingham. Quite easily, too, by a couple of lengths. Harry Wragg was on the second, Lord Bill, who had been winning races. I asked him if there was any excuse for his horse. "None at all," he said, and added, "Disarmament won like a good horse."

\* Now here was something to think about. Disarmament must now have a very fair chance for the Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Heathorn had to think about his liabilities in the Cesarewitch, which, as is well known, comes a fortnight ahead of the other race. It is true Six Wheeler and Leonard on form seemed to have only a remote chance. But then remote chances have won big races before to-day. There have been 100 to 1 winners of the Derby, and, indeed, three of the Cesarewitch in Light Dragoon, Myra Gray, and Charley's Mount in quite recent years. Six Wheeler simply could not be ignored.

And then there was Leonard. As a matter of fact it is curious in the light of what happened to think that although he carried 6 lb. overweight in the Cesarewitch Leonard started at 66 to 1 as against the starting price of 100 to 1 against Six Wheeler. No one would think of Six Wheeler getting the course, and, naturally, there was no need of his owner to lay out much money on either of them. If either should win what clover he would be in with the double event to play about with! He would have more than one bookmaker at his mercy.

Some days after Disarmament had won Mr. Heathorn thought it prudent to get into touch with Mr. Clayton. He put a call through to Huddersfield, and it proved to be a fairly long one. I imagine Mr. Clayton was expecting it. He was ever inclined to chuckle. Disarmament was at less than 20 to 1 for the Cambridgeshire. The bookmaker could not afford to wait to cover on Disarmament in the event of Six Wheeler or the other one winning the Cesarewitch. He must act at once, and who better in a position to lay him a bet against Disarmament than the horse's owner? So that was the proposition put forward in the trunk call.

Would he lay the bookmaker a contingent bet of £40,000 to £1000 against Disarmament for the Cambridgeshire in the event of one of his horses winning the Cesarewitch? Yes, said the old Yorkshireman, he would not mind laying a contingent wager of the sort, but what about making it £40,000 to £2000? Even that, he naïvely pointed out, was better than the market odds and what he (the bookmaker) was laying to his clients. Mr. Clayton may have been described by the speaker at the other end of the telephone as a very hard man, though not seriously. The point is that he not only held the whip this time but was entitled to crack it, and so the con-

tingent bet of £40,000 to £2000 was agreed to. The holder of the voucher now stood to win £60,000 in the event of winning both races and £2000 if one won the Cesarewitch and the other lost the Cambridgeshire. The bookmaker had now to concentrate on the big balance, though, of course, the Cesarewitch had still to be won and there did not seem much chance of that being pulled off.

History tells what happened. Six Wheeler only lost the Cesarewitch by a length and a half. He was beaten by a notably fine stayer, Noble Star, who over the previous weekend had been reported to be coughing. Disarmament won the Cambridgeshire with great ease by three lengths. No man will ever come so near again to landing such a magnificent double event wager. For that matter no man may ever be found willing to lay one of such size again. Mr. Clayton did make the bookmaker pay him something on a straight-out bet on Disarmament on the day, but he only had on half what he intended. The horse was drawn away on the far side from which winners of the Cambridgeshire, when there is a big field, so seldom come. He was dismayed and cut down his proposed investments. The sight of his horse winning so easily would drive away dismay. The old man loved his horses even though he did expect them to work almost as hard as he himself did.

Craganour was in the oblong-shaped unsaddling enclosure which was known as the "Well," before the Grand Stand at Epsom was reconstructed. The colt had just come in first for the Derby. The saddle had been removed, and the jockey had passed into the weighing-room to go through the weighing-in formalities. Craganour stood steaming and exhausted after his great effort. The critics were gazing at him intently. In a moment or two the "All Right" signal would be given and the Derby winner would be led away. A man, hot, tired, and much disappointed, sat disconsolately on a stone coping in the "Well." He had just lost £20,000. The man was the founder of a very big starting-price business. His firm had laid against Craganour to lose £10,000. He had personally laid another £10,000 against the horse. In the early part of the year a well-known veterinary surgeon, who died some years ago, and had a big consulting practice with some of the

prominent racing stables, had told the starting-price bookmaker that Craganour might never see the post for the Derby. The bookmaker accepted the tip. He does not differ from the backer in having a preference for an inspired marked "card."

Just then an Epsom trainer came up to the £20,000 loser. He was "Old man Duller." He was known as "Hoppy" Duller because he was very lame. And he was the father of George Duller, who vastly distinguished himself as a hurdle race jockey until he took up training. Duller senior was rough, unsophisticated, and unvarnished in his manners at all times.

"What's the matter, Guv'nor? You're looking glum."

"Yes, I am. I've lost much too much money. But there you are. I listened to the old tale. It wouldn't run."

"Well, don't worry. I'll bet you £100 to 10s. that it doesn't get the race now," he said, pulling out half a sovereign.

"What do you mean?" inquired the man thus challenged. He was taking a little notice now.

"It might be disqualified. That's what I mean."

"Well, anyhow, you've got your bet. You've got £100 to 10s."

Craganour, as I have related in another chapter, was detained. Back came Duller to the bookmaker to inquire: "How are you feeling now?"

"Oh, that's all right. I've forgotten about it now." He had not a suspicion even then that they might disqualify the Derby winner.

Then Duller said: "Now I'll bet you an even 'pony' (£25) he doesn't get the race. And come and have a pint with me because I can tell you it will be disqualified."

Obviously, at least one man in addition to the Stewards knew what fate had been meted out to Craganour before the number board told the world about it. The poor disconsolate bookmaker who had been so sorry for himself a few moments before found himself £19,875 better off. Providence looks after his own.

The scene this time is the Midland Hotel at Manchester, and the time was 1926. At one table were Sir Hugo Cunliffe-Owen and his late much-lamented wife. Another lady at the table was Mrs. Fetherstonhaugh, whose husband, the late

Major Fred Fetherstonhaugh, was then managing the Royal stud and racing stable. At another table was Mr. Martin Henry Benson, founder of the big starting-price business in London which is known as Douglas Stuart.

Mr. Benson was called over by Sir Hugo, and after chatting a while he was asked what price he would lay against a foal of that year winning the Derby three years later. He suggested 1000 to 10 would be a fair price. Incidentally, I do not think he was offering over the odds. The layer is never guilty of such a thing, not, that is, if he knows it.

"Well," Mr. Benson, "what price will you bet me one of ours, now a foal, for the Derby of 1928?" inquired Lady Cunliffe-Owen.

She was assured that she might have the odds he had named. The reader may be reminded that entries for that Derby were not due to be made until the Autumn of the following year when the foal would be a yearling.

"And I'll have the same bet," interposed Sir Hugo.

"Ah, Sir Hugo," came the rejoinder, "that was a lady's bet. You must name the foal. You may be going to enter several when the time comes."

"Right. I'll name the foal—a colt by Spion Kop from Felkington." The bet was made. It cost Mr. Benson £2000 paying a visit to that table. For, just about two and a half years later, the colt foal then known as Felstead did win the Derby, but as the starting price was 33 to 1 there is no need to be specially solicitous about the layer. I daresay he was thankful to pay the two and a half year old wagers.

The bookmaker who sits in an office, or even if he be one of men of substance and weight who lean on the rails dividing Tattersalls and Members' enclosures on our racecourses, can be said to have the whole field of ante-post betting practically to himself. The Tote has made no inroads in that direction into his business. It is probably true that ante-post betting is nothing like what it was, though I have known of some whacking big wagers made and paid in my time. To-day there are fewer men able and willing to handle the big commissions. Maybe that is because there are fewer big commissions. There are lots of small fry who, when the big man gets to work all over England and Scotland, will accept just as much as it suits them. After all, it is their business to lay



against horses, and they find it helpful to know what is in the big man's mind.

The average backer of horses is showing commendable reluctance to rush in and take the bookmaker's price days and weeks before the race. He is discouraged by the monotonously tragic fate of most favourites for big races, especially for handicaps. If he must be limited to only a single choice he prefers to wait and get a run for his money and not risk the agony of reading in his newspaper that the horse he backed has fallen lame and will not run or has started coughing and must be regarded as a doubtful starter. He has been aware, of course, of the risk when he took the longer price well ahead of the race, but he finds it hard not to have a run for his money.

The individual who really keeps ante-post betting alive is he who makes what is called a backing book. He will back a group of horses, even up to a dozen, at long prices so that whichever wins he will win. Or it may suit him to lay off should the horses come to shorter prices as he can reasonably expect them to do if they are live propositions. In the latter event the coming up of zero in the form of 100 to 1 winners of races like the Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire need not have the same terrors for him.

Let me note another change which I have observed. In earlier years one who might be entrusted to execute a considerable commission to back a horse for a big race would make contact with a number of bookmakers having early books on the race. They would lay him a price. They would rapidly cut the price and the agent would have to accept the lower figure and so on until his commission had been duly executed. All the bets would be returned to the owner, who would learn of the average price he had received to his outlay. Then the public would come in if owner and his horse inspired confidence, and the owner would have some chance of hedging if he wished to.

Nowadays, one with "work" to do will go to one of the few leading men of the nineteen-thirties and put his cards on the table. "I want a thousand pounds on Scattercash," he will say.

"Is that the full extent of the money to go on?" inquires the bookmaker.

He is assured that it is. "Very well, then, I'll lay you

£10,000 to £1000, which is top price, on the understanding that you don't interfere for forty-eight hours."

The gentlemen's agreement is duly arrived at. The agent has completed his business in one hand. He knows that if he had tried to get on the £1000 here and there the price would not have averaged 10 to 1. What the bookmaker proceeds to do then is his business. Certainly it is not his business to carry that load himself. So he calls up the big men in the country and gets 10 to 1 to as much as he wants, more if he can do so. The price comes down and the bookmaker can ladle out some of his bets at the shorter prices and so make certain of a profit for himself on that particular horse.

I well remember two big wagers of the sort being made about French horses, both of which won their races. One was Epinard for the Stewards Cup at Goodwood in 1923. He had to send the client in France a cheque for £8000. When Rose Prince in the same year was sent from France to win the Cesarewitch, a bookmaker, operating obviously on a big scale, paid out a cheque for £12,800. He had laid a bet of £12,800 to £500 against the horse. Many will recall the French horse Palais Royal II winning our Cambridgeshire after running second to Fairway for the St. Leger of 1928. The big operator I have in mind laid to a French client in one hand £26,000 to £1000.

At the outset of this chapter I have related the circumstances by which Mr. Heathorn just escaped having to pay £100,000 over Mr. Clayton's unique Cesarewitch and Cambridgeshire double event wager, though he tells me it would have paid him ever so much better to have paid out the £100,000. He explains himself by reason of the very big sums he had to pay out over the Cesarewitch winner, Noble Star, and what he would have won through the success of the 100 to 1 chance Six Wheeler. There was an occasion, however, when he did have to pay out on a paltry double event he laid of £10,000 to £40 over Furious for the Lincolnshire Handicap and Troytown for the Grand National. This he did after laying Furious for the one race to £400 at 33's. I imagine he came to no harm because he suggested to the fortunate receiver of the £10,000 cheque that he should give an elaborate dinner to fifty or so of his and the bookmaker's personal friends to celebrate. The winner was a Scotsman. Mr. Heathorn

tactfully suggested that the dinner arrangements should be left to him to organise. He duly did it well and truly at the Café Royal in Regent Street, because I was there. I have no doubt that was the beginning of the hole that grew and grew in the ten thousand pound luck.

I have known of a non-betting owner to have a thousand each way on his horse for the Derby and on the Monday following receive a cheque for £12,500. I cannot possibly mention names because happily all the parties concerned are alive to-day. Why did he do it? The answer is that he was contemplating, in the event of success, giving a very big present to the jockey. There would be lots of other monies to give away too. There seemed to me some sense in getting the jockey a present of round about £5000 out of the bookmaker for a risk of something like £500.

We had bright nights when the members of the old H.B. Club and their guests dined and wined, and, having done both really well, they were in the right mood to bid beyond sane prices for horses in the customary selling sweepstakes. For several years I was a guest. Then I took on the honorary secretaryship when that best of good companions, "Dody" Pattinson, ended his life. And, because I believed so much in the good fellowship of these occasions and regretted that the old Club had to die, I accepted the honour of the honorary secretaryship of the Derby Club, which, under the great personal popularity of Lord Derby, was instantly built up on the ashes of the old fraternity.

In the last two or three years of its life one watched the break-up of the H.B.'s. Some were getting very old, some had lost their way in the economic blizzard when it raged, several passed on. The burden of entertaining in the old style was more than the few could bear. Men who could not entertain as they had done would rather quietly drop out. Leo Harward, the best known of all the City bookmakers and a member of the Stock Exchange, had been the most lavish of the hosts for years. He grouped around him all his best and most profitable backers. It was a fine business stroke anyway. No doubt he showed a profit on the dinner charges he had to meet.

The late Mr. Sol Joel was not a member. So many people thought he was the main prop of the Club. But he hardly missed a dinner. I recall one occasion when he would not

come to the dinner before a Derby. During the day he had received a shock in the form of bad news about his Derby candidate, Pondoland. He had backed the horse for a lot of money, and there is no doubt he thought the colt had a great chance. He was so upset that I was assured he had gone to bed prostrate with his disappointment.

Mr. Joel pretended that he hated the job of conducting the auction on the sweepstakes, but really he loved it. His voice, never attuned to shouting "Ahoy there" from the bridge of his yacht, barely lasted out. I shall never forget his despairing appeals for silence in the room and his solemn threats to abandon the job unless he was given undivided attention.

Tom Honey, the autocratic president, and wearing a heavy jewelled badge of office across his shirt front, was for ever reminding us in his frequent speeches and interruptions of his "dear old friend Solly." This leader of the "Honey Bees" (for which H.B. stood) was loquacious, jocular, and tactful where S.B.J. was concerned. He was the London secretary of Johannesburg Consolidated of which Mr. Joel was the head. He saw to it that S.B.J. was pleased, and that he worked hard for "Order" with his hammer just as the "chaplain" (Fred Bishop) with a deep scowl stentoriously commanded "Order."

The autocratic president was very deaf and carried a portable instrument as an aid to hearing. I noticed his hearing did not fail him if ever his name was called out as having drawn a horse in the Sweep, while he listened raptly to the honeyed words of the Club's silver-tongued orator, Sir Walter de Frece, when he dwelt affectionately on "my dear old friend Tom" or "our dear old friend Solly." De Frece's banter was at times brilliant. The late Lord Dewar brought out his latest aphorisms and wise-cracks. Edgar Wallace, in later years, captured the spirit of the Club and became a licensed leg-puller.

And then there was the draw, beginning sometimes with a pool of £1000 subscribed in the room in pound shares and coming from less than two hundred. I made a good start when one of my few numbers drew Craig an Eran, then favourite for the Derby of 1921. He sold for £350, and, of course, half came my way and the other half went the way of the Pool. At the 1930 Derby dinner Claude Leigh, who

if he fell into very unpleasant waters would rise smelling of eau-de-Cologne, so astonishing is his luck, bought Blenheim, though the Aga Khan had a presumed better horse running for him in Rustom Pasha.

Claude Leigh knew nothing about horses, but he knew the Aga Khan, and that must have been the only reason why he took a chance with Blenheim. He scooped in the first prize of something like £1500 and then gave a dinner to the H.B.'s. at the Savoy with one end of the banqueting room transformed to represent the scene at Epsom on Derby day. The bill he had to meet would melt down his winnings.

The old H.B. Club was practically dead when the Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas presided over a Derby dinner in 1932. He had Lord Rosebery on his right, Lord Derby on his left. "My friend 'Dahby'" came in for frequent mention by him. Brevity on this occasion was not the soul of his wit, but he can at any rate say that the Derby Club was born at the dinner, and that, fully fledged, its first Derby dinner was held in the following year.

Mr. Winston Churchill drew out from the drum the number of one of five or ten tickets taken in the Sweep by Lord Derby. Sir Abe Bailey dipped into the other drum and pulled out the little bit of pasteboard on which the name of Hyperion was written. When I announced that the owner of the number which had drawn Hyperion was the President I shall never forget the look of blank amazement which first passed over the face of Lord Derby. Sir Abe Bailey leaned over towards him, having noted that first look of astonishment, and gravely remarked: "Well, you'd have done the same for me, wouldn't you?" Then did the familiar smile break through, followed by a good laugh over Sir Abe's joyous remark. He obviously had not believed in such luck, that such tremendous odds could turn up in his favour. For, let me tell you, there were a thousand or more tickets in the first instance, and only a few over a score of horses to be distributed among those thousand holders according to the luck of the draw. Lord Derby, of course, might have drawn any horse, but to get his own and then see it sold by Sir Alfred Butt to a lucky and inspired bidder for £750 was, well, quite stupendous luck. Half the amount went into the Pool, half as I have explained to Lord Derby as the drawer.

## CHAPTER XXI

### STEEPLECHASING AND GRAND NATIONAL MEMORIES

The Grand National course : criticism and changes—Sir Charles Assheton-Smith as prince of buyers—His reluctance to purchase his best horse—Stories of Poethlyn, Troytown, and Jack Horner—Modern methods of training steeplechasers—The King at the Canal Turn.

FOR as long as I can remember there has been controversy over the Grand National Steeplechase, which, except for a break of three years in the War, has been run without interruption at Aintree, Liverpool, since 1839. I expect there were rows and humanitarians and squabbles among the old timers even in those beginning days. They may not have cared for the plough, the hurdles, and the stone walls. In 1911 Glenside came in alone, done to much more than a turn. He had only one eye, and a week before he ran he was coughing and had a temperature. But he was the only one to keep on his legs and finish. Some time later three others completed the course, but they had either fallen or refused at least once. For a week or more the correspondence columns of the newspapers contained letters denouncing the brutalities of the steeplechase. The jumps were small mountains and the distance too far. No humane man, it was urged, would think of subjecting his horse to such a terrific and outrageous ordeal.

The outcry would die down. It flared up again practically every year after the race. Especially has this been the case since the War. Fields have grown in size and the casualty list has been long. The late Mr. Edward Topham, for so many years Clerk of the Course and lessee of it from the Earl of Sefton, was exhorted by the humanitarians to reduce the size of the fences. Others slashed him with criticism for having in their opinion tinkered with the venerable institutions and dared him to listen to the reformers. What had been good

enough for our forefathers, they said, should be good enough for the present-day breed of horse and the modern race of jockey, even though the latter had pulled up their stirrup leathers many holes compared with the way of riding of the Old Brigade.

After the Grand National of 1932, when eight were declared to have completed the course out of thirty-six starters, I received a long letter of criticism from one holding an important position and who was fully entitled to express an opinion. For he has ridden in the race with very special distinction. His letter was never published because it was not written for publication. The writer, however, will not mind if I mention what he took exception to and state his reasons for the excessive amount of grief year after year. He was not asking for an easier course. Rather was he angry that it had been made easier. He complained of the sloping of the fences and the lack of "guts" in them: also that there had been changes in individual fences. My correspondent agreed that the fences "even as they are" take more jumping than any park fences, while the drop fences were real death traps to the "monkeys." These facts, he maintained, considered in conjunction with the length of the race, the number of starters, which must include many bad horses, and worse jockeys, the pace at which the race is run, including the mad rush to start with, all account for the numerous casualties. Loose horses, he added, are the nightmare of a rider in the "National," and the number of these pests multiply in proportion to the number of bad horses and bad jockeys who take part.

The late Mr. Edward Topham was a very good friend of mine, but he could not bear any criticism of his steeplechase course. I am sure he looked upon it as being mealy-mouthed. I have made criticism which I thought extremely reasonable. Apart from the narrow point of view of the "humane" person who kept butting in I asked what entertainment and satisfaction could possibly be derived out of seeing no more than ten per cent of the starters, sometimes less, complete the course? What thrill was there in seeing the modern chaser being trotted back after refusing or falling? They would be returning in dribblets while the few survivors had still a long way to go. If horses and jockeys were not what they were then the Grand National would degenerate as a spectacle. It would become

farcical. So I may have encouraged Mr. Topham to do something.

It may be of interest if I note such changes as have taken place in my time without, however, changing the true character of the course. It is true the bottoms of the fences have been pulled outwards so as to give the impression of a sloping fence, which, I think, is right in these days of terrifically fast steeple-chasing. It helps a horse to measure his take off without getting too close. The upright fence is all right for show jumping. It is not all right for racing. The actual fences may not be as thick and stubborn as they were. I have no means of comparison. Mr. Topham swore there had been no change in that respect. I know blunderers can make great gaps in them, though after doing so they have used up their reserves except in one historic case which I shall mention.

One important change was to fill in the ditch at the Canal Turn. It used to be a wide dry ditch with a guard rail in front and then the fence. On landing jockeys had to switch their horses sharp left-handed in order to head for Valentine's close at hand. Failure to do so would land them in the canal not so many yards away. I entirely approved of the change which made the Canal Turn a plain fence. The cleverest horse in the world may make a fatal mistake at a formidable obstacle, such as the Canal Turn was, if his attention is distracted by the great crowd in the vicinity. The people are on a stand staring right into the fence and at the line of approaching horses. Perhaps they are shouting. Jockeys, who have won Grand Nationals, have told me they have felt their horses wince from excitement on sighting the mass of people. They think they are going right into them.

I shall never forget seeing that most brilliant horse Easter Hero, who so seldom made a mistake, swerve as he took off at the old fence, and, in doing so, caused horses in his wake to be blinded at the fence. And they in their turn caused others to be blinded so that at one moment there must have been a score either actually in the ditch, straddling the fence, or pulled up. It was the year that Tipperary Tim, tubed and a 100 to 1 chance, came in alone, for the only horse standing up with him at the last fence was the American, Billy Barton. Shall I ever forget the groan that went up or the utter mortification of our American visitors, who, of course, had backed



Billy Barton, when they saw their horse crumple up on landing over the fence?

That Canal Turn tragedy, initiated by the most brilliant steeplechaser of his day, may be said to have brought about the filling in of the open ditch. Now what other changes have been introduced. Really I can think of no other except the levelling up of approaches to certain of the fences. They badly wanted attention. No one clamoured for that more than Jack Anthony. He rode three Grand National winners and completed the course more often than not. No one can say that he was not a very brave fellow, with "guts" and nerve. There was one fence, a plain one, just before Becher's, that gave him three falls. He attributed them entirely to his horses being deceived by the sudden drop in the ground, a few strides from the fence. One that fell with him there was Forewarned, a Wroughton-trained horse that was immensely fancied. On that occasion I had the honour of being in Lord Derby's party, which included the Prince of Wales, in the little stand that had been erected near Valentine's a year or two before to accommodate the King. I fancy His Royal Highness had a special interest in Forewarned that day to judge by his expression of disappointment when told that the horse was down at the fence before Becher's while on the second circuit.

For a long time Mr. Topham made no attempt to adjust the levels. When he did so he told Anthony, who by this time had given up riding and was training with success for Mr. J. H. Whitney, the American owner, that he found there had existed a drop of eighteen inches at the much-criticised fence. I have been a critic of Becher's, which may be a form of heresy. I still believe I am right. I have no quarrel with the height of the fence or that the landing side should be so very much lower than the take-off side. That steep drop does give horses the surprise and shock of their lives. Yet it would be accepted as part of the unique test if the landing side were level. But it slopes abruptly, and especially does it do so away to the right into the narrow open drain which is called a brook.

A perfect jump will carry the horse clear though the steep pitch cannot be avoided. The horse that has not jumped so cleverly, perhaps taken off just a trifle too soon, has no chance of making a clever recovery because his hind-legs drop behind him where the ground falls away. There is an enormous

strain on the hocks and the back. The horse is winded. The jockey is fortunate if he keeps in the "plate." Jack Anthony, whose name has just been mentioned, has spoken of the strain to his own back as with body thrown right back he is helping his horse to make a good landing. Some day, perhaps, there will be a levelling up on the landing side of Becher's and these remarks will have no weight except in sketching what the old position was.

Would a Grand National course be laid out on the same plan to-day, assuming it were necessary to create a new one? If the one at Aintree were not in existence is it conceivable that the modern architect of a steeplechase course would plan one with similar features? I do not think so for one moment. It must be borne in mind that there is a big difference between Point-to-Point racing and the sort of course appropriate to it and what is required for racing over fences. The much faster times tell that Grand Nationals of old could not possibly have been run at anything like the same pace. The course and fences, with its sharp left-handed turn at the Canal, could not have been planned for horses tearing along with their riders crouching and knees drawn up. It is the pace that causes the grief at the fences in modern times, not any degeneration in the horse or want of pluck on the part of the riders.

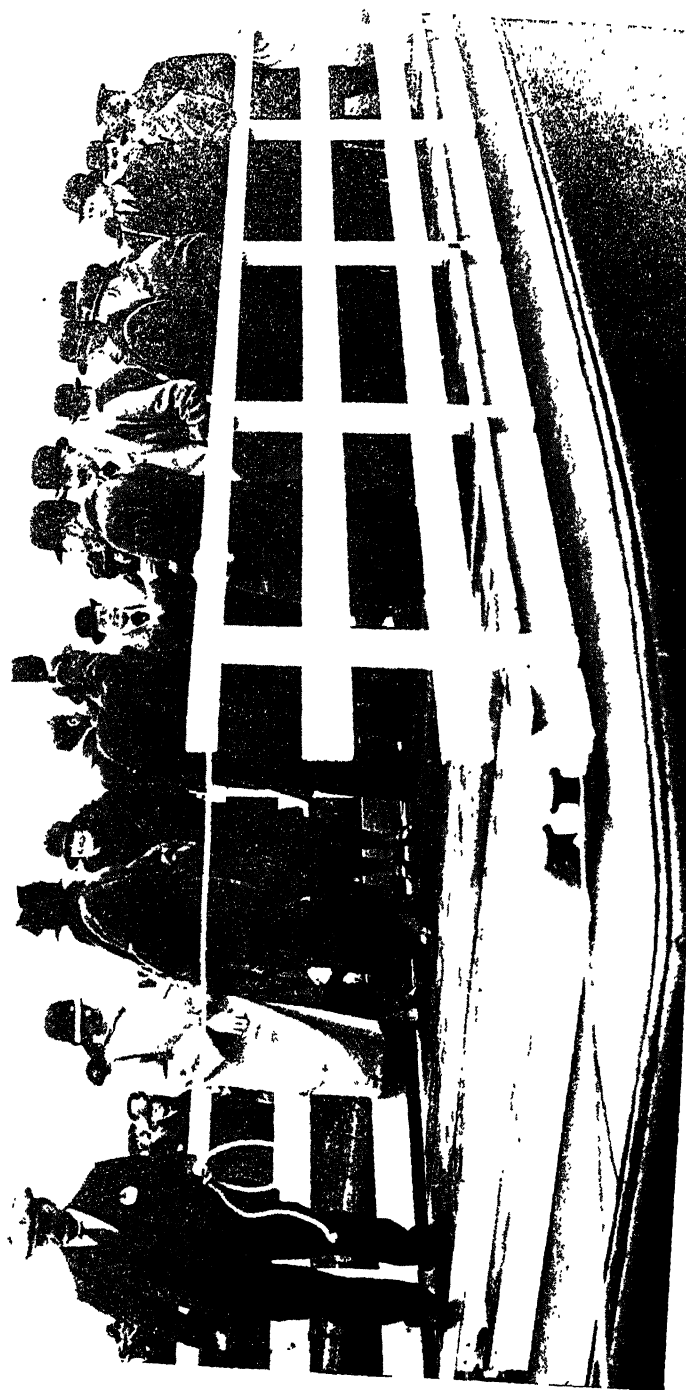
It is the pace, plus the greater chance of fatal mistakes, because riding with short leathers does not give leg grip and minimises balance, that makes the Grand National course take grim toll. Its victims come from park courses over which they have been racing and taking chances. The same chances cannot be taken at any one of Aintree's fences. There is no time to permit the horse to settle down and adapt himself to something he knows little or nothing of. Jockeys want to get round in the shortest possible time. They have been exhorted to keep out of trouble. Their idea of doing so is to hit the front at once, and, if possible, leave trouble for the others behind. It is all a breathless business.

Glenside, I have mentioned, came in alone in 1911. If we take that year and every year since the War up to 1933 it is rather interesting to note that there have been 535 runners, of which it is claimed that 115 completed the course. This does not look such a dismal average, though it must be added that

many of the number that finished had fallen and then been remounted. One, I remember, fell four or five times, but his redoubtable rider had inexhaustible determination and he did what he set out to do, to finish, if not to win, and claim a side bet. Actually the best average was in 1933 when Kellsboro Jack, after winning in record time—9 minutes 28 seconds—had eighteen others behind him to finish. There were only nine out of the record field of sixty-six when Gregalach won in 1929 and only five out of forty-one when Shaun Goilin came in first a year later. There were also five finishers in the years when the winners were Master Robert and Music Hall, and four in Shaun Spadah's year.

Really Shaun Spadah can be said to have come in alone, because The Bore, who was following him into the last fence, though with no chance of beating him, fell heavily. His gallant owner-rider, Mr. Harry Brown, dragged the bridle off as he fell and broke his collar bone. What he did then was about the most gallant thing I ever saw in a Grand National. He might have been excused had he given in. Think of the situation. The horse pumped and now on his legs but with no bit in his mouth, the jockey muddy, pretty well exhausted too, and with a sharp stinging pain in his shoulder. He could not lift his arm and must have known at the moment that there was a break. How he got back into the saddle is best known to himself. The gallant old horse seemed to understand. He broke into a slow canter and so he went past the winning post. Just as much cheering greeted them as the winner had received. No one wanted to see another horse come up and get the second place. Even so there was not much to spare of All White, who also had fallen and had been remounted though some way out in the "country."

I have recollections of four outstanding Grand National winners. They are Jerry M. (1912, 12 st. 7 lb.); Poethlyn (1919, 12 st. 7 lb.); Troytown (1920, 11 st. 9 lb.); and Golden Miller (1934, 12 st. 2 lb.). Jerry M. was a grand horse, as fit to the manner born for Aintree. Poethlyn was more spectacular and took with him to Aintree all the brilliance he showed on park courses, notably when he won the War National at Gatwick in 1918. Troytown was massive and devastatingly good. Had he lived he would, in all probability, have won a second "National" under the maximum burden of 12 st. 7 lb.



HIS MAJESTY THE KING AND OTHERS OF LORD DERBY'S GUESTS ON A BARGE CROSSING THE CANAL NEAR  
VALENTINE'S BROOK TO WATCH THE RACE FOR THE GRAND NATIONAL OF 1924 FROM A SPECIAL  
STAND OVERLOOKING THAT FAMOUS FENCE

The steeplechase that year was won by Master Robert.



And yet I believe that the most brilliant horse that has appeared at Aintree in my time is Easter Hero. He did not win. But in 1929, when there was that record field of sixty-six, he was second in a great effort to give 17 lb. to the winner, Gregalach, who on a later occasion finished third with 12 st. on his back. It is even possible that he might have won but for spreading and twisting a plate on landing over a fence three from home.

Jerry M. was not an oil painting, so to say. He was long in the back; his head seemed odd, and between it and the splendid shoulders was a rather mean, slightly-ewed neck, for such a big fellow. He was immensely deep through the heart, showing there was plenty of room for lung and heart space. But the back was long, giving the idea of slackness about the loins as if he had been made with a rib short. The quarters were powerful and full. He was such an intelligent fellow. No wonder Robert Gore, who trained him, and Ernest Piggott, who rode him for Sir Charles Assheton-Smith, adored him. So did his owner after he had brought him such great joy, but he had hated the idea of buying him. He wanted to stand on the vet's report that he could not really pass him sound as he made a slight whistle which might develop into roaring rather than take the urgent advice of Gore to take a chance and buy him.

They were not asking much more than about a thousand pounds for him. Sir Charles had not hesitated to give thousands for proved chasers, of whom Cackler was a shining example. Gore really had *carte blanche* to buy anything he fancied, especially any horse that had shown exceptional form and might be a potential Grand National winner. Sir Charles was just crazy to win "Nationals" and keep on winning them. He was rich, by far the richest man in the game, and his offers could not be resisted.

Sir Charles first sent his own "vet" over to Mr. J. Widger's place in Ireland to report on Jerry M., in regard to soundness. He returned saying he had not been able to make a proper examination as he found the horse suffering from a cold and running at the nose. In the circumstances it would not have been fair to gallop him for his wind. It was known that Mr. Tommy Lushington, who had secured Ambush II to win the Grand National for King Edward in 1900, had been

after him, but would not take the risk of the slight noise he made. Mr. Hubert Hartigan had actually agreed to have him, but would not take delivery when his "vet" rejected him.

Mr. Williams, who was the professional man employed by Sir Charles, was sent over again, and this time there was no doubt about his unwillingness to pass the horse.

"That's enough," said Sir Charles, "we won't have him."

He spoke the words to his trainer, Robert Gore, at Claridge's Hotel in London. The latter retorted with: "Remember one thing, Sir Charles. If you don't have this horse you will not have another chance. He will be sold before to-night. He'll be sold inside of two hours and then don't blame me."

"Who'll buy him?" he inquired.

"Mr. Paul Nelke."

"He won't have him. He's a Jew," observed Sir Charles. Then he went on: "I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll toss you whether I have him or not."

They tossed, and Sir Charles lost. Most reluctantly he became the buyer of his Grand National winner for only £1100. About the first race the horse won in England was the New Century Steeplechase at Hurst Park. What an impression he made as he slammed his opponents! In his first bid to win the Grand National, 1910, he was second in a splendid effort to give no less than 30 lb. to the winner, Jenkinstown.

I shall not forget the stir there was the following year. Jerry M., of course, had a big weight again. So had Sir Charles's other horses, including the brilliant Cackler. Mr. Topham, who made the handicap, obviously thought they were outstanding, as, indeed, they were. Their owner said that they had been most harshly treated. He was not going to let them carry impossible and unfair weights, and he caused the whole fleet, including Jerry M., to be scratched. He did not escape criticism.

Yet Jerry M. had 12 st. 7 lb. again the following year. The maximum weight did not stop him. He was a grand winner from a smart horse in Mr. Bower Ismay's Bloodstone, who was receiving from him 15 lb. To the third, Axle Pin, who ran for Lord Derby, he gave 33 lb. Covertcoat won for him the following year, by which time the winning of Grand Nationals seemed to be so easy. He can now be said to have been in full

cry after securing the best in the land. Very soon after Sunloch had won the race in 1914 he had bought that horse for £1500. Now he possessed three living winners of this Blue Riband—Jerry M., Covertcoat and Sunloch.

Sunloch had made the whole of the running to win under the minimum weight of 9 st. 7 lb. I can see him now, jumping to the right at every fence and thereby covering very much more ground than he need have done. I cannot write all I know about this horse and those associated with him. It might be dangerous to do so even at this distance of time. He went wrong in his wind soon after Sir Charles bought him and that was the end of his career.

As Sir Charles Assheton-Smith he won his third "National" with Covertcoat, who with 11 st. 6 lb. up beat twenty-one others. That was highly satisfactory, but it was merely whetting his appetite for more. Covertcoat won in the year before the War. His owner did not live very far into it. He had heart weakness, and I often wondered that the excitement he showed when one of his horses was running did not prove fatal at the time. Happily when the end came he was in peaceful surroundings. It was after Covertcoat's success that he invited me to spend a few days with him at Vaynol. I was to see Jerry M., in his retirement, and Covertcoat enjoying a holiday in most luxurious surroundings. Their owner was a man who thoroughly enjoyed his territorial position in this part of Wales. He believed in living up to the part and letting others know it. His employees, especially his personal servants, showed him the utmost deference. Such hat-raising there could never have been since the old feudal times. I have no doubt they were fond of him. After all he was somebody in this world as well as in the world of steeplechasing in which alone I had known him. There were the hundreds and thousands working in his slate quarries. One day we paid them a visit, stepping into a special waggon on a private railway and were taken to where blasting and quarrying were in progress on what looked like the side of a mountain.

Another day we went to look over his beautiful white-painted steam yacht. It was out of commission and lying in a tiny private harbour abutting on the Menai Strait. Let into the white panels of the saloon and of his own room were large pictures of his famous steeplechasers. There was a model in



glass of the yacht, by the way, let into the panelling of the dining room at Vaynol Park. It was illuminated during dinner. One morning we strolled into the park and he pointed out his herd of wild cattle or bison. They had become dangerous, he said, and he was making arrangements to have them removed. One or two of the bulls looked at their owner with a leering sort of menace. There was no confidence in the look he returned them. Personally I had more in the big stout fence between us. He may not have had even as much, for he suggested a move on without more ado.

Every morning we went to the stables. Humbler folk would not have been ashamed of them as drawing-rooms. There was much brass and gold paint. His colours of a dark green and a sort of claret-coloured cap were suggested. They were enclosed in glass frames, one of which contained the head of Cloister as set up by a taxidermist. It was suspended from one of the walls. Jerry M.'s colours, as carried by his jockey when the horse won, were in another case. Soon there would be a third as a trophy for Covertcoat. I found Jerry M. rather emaciated looking. It was as if he was suffering from a wasting disease, and so, I believe, he was, but he was being made as happy as ever a horse could be. He came forward as his owner, carrying sliced carrots, made his matutinal offering.

The old horse seemed to know and understand. Ernest Piggott once told me that Jerry M. used to sight a fence forty or fifty yards before coming to it. He would prick his ears and even then begin to measure his take-off so as to jump perfectly. Poethlyn, on the other hand, would blaze at them and trust to his cleverness in putting in an extra short one if necessary to steer clear of trouble. He blazed rather too furiously in the year after he won, for he fell at the first fence. He did not give himself a chance to settle down.

I always think the story Major Hugh Peel tells about his wife's horse (for Poethlyn achieved renown in her name) takes a deal of beating. He gave twenty-five guineas for the dam, Fine Champagne, at auction. Mating her with a little-known horse named Rydal Head the produce was a weakling of a foal which he sold for seven guineas. Two years afterwards he was asked to go and look at an overgrown two-year-old at Shrewsbury. He and his wife went and found it was the wretched foal he had sold two years before. They bought him for

fifty pounds and the first salmon he caught! That was Poethlyn.

Troytown was a massive horse in every sense of the word. I do not think I ever set eyes on a more powerful horse in front of the saddle. Such development there was as to be quite abnormal and make what was behind the saddle seem inadequate. Actually he did appear to fall away about his loins though not about his quarters. On an ordinary horse such conformation would have been approved. Jack Anthony, who won on him, once tried to justify the conformation by saying: "Well, isn't that the right place to be magnificently developed. An athlete wants all chest and shoulder development. He doesn't want to be big below."

I think this was the worst day I have ever known at Aintree. There were pools on the course from the prolonged rain. The paddock was a quagmire. Lots of people got severe chills that afternoon. Troytown's strength and endurance would be tested in such conditions. His enormous weight and strength were to rescue him from a position later which would have wrecked the further progress of any normal horse. Jack Anthony will never forget his sensations when they cleared the water jump in front of the stands. Troytown slithered for several yards but recovered his legs. He was several lengths in front of the nearest horse. Going round the corner into the country for the second time the jockey took a mighty pull at him. He said to himself: "Heavens, will I last?" Not will the horse last, mind you, but would a hard and fit jockey last it out?

Troytown answered the pull. He dropped his bit for a few strides and gave Anthony a chance to take one of two deep breaths. It was then that Turkey Buzzard and Ardonagh came up alongside. W. Payne was on one and Mr. Percy Whitaker on the other. They went on together. At the first of the open ditches Troytown made a mistake and dropped back a length or two. Ardonagh's rider exclaimed to Payne: "He's gone!" They led now by two lengths, but two fences on Troytown had jumped past them. At the next fence, which is the plain one just before Becher's, both fell and Troytown was once more alone and in front.

Anthony has told me that he never saw another horse until arriving at the last of the open ditches. It is the last fence

before getting on to the racecourse for the finish. Then there are three more to cross. Maybe the jockey was taking things rather too much for granted. Anyhow Troytown took off much too soon and landed on the top of the fence. If ever a horse looked finished this one did. But he struggled and made a hole big enough for a taxi to be driven through, and just as the jockey was getting back into the saddle both The Bore and The Turk II passed him. By the time the first of the three last fences had been reached Troytown had caught them. He jumped a length behind The Bore and landed a length in front. This extraordinary horse went on apparently stronger than ever, never to be menaced again, and to keep on galloping a long way round the corner beyond the finishing post before his jockey could pull him up. Anthony thinks the horse could have won with 14 st. on his back that day.

Alas, Troytown did not long survive his triumph. While competing at Auteuil in Paris for the Prix des Drags he probably hit himself in jumping an obstacle which is made up of a brook and post and rails. The big horse did not even fall. All the same he had broken his leg just above the knee. I mention what happened to him because I have seen it stated with some authority that he broke his back. He did not. It is just as well to be under no misapprehension as to what happened. Of course he had to be humanely destroyed as speedily as possible.

Now I come to Easter Hero. I have described him as brilliant, probably the most brilliant horse I have ever seen at Aintree, or, indeed, on any steeplechase course. Mr. Frank Barbour first exploited him in England and sold him for a big sum. He passed into other ownerships. Mr. A. Loewenstein, the Belgian financier, paid a big price for him. The financier fell out of an aeroplane while crossing the North Sea. Easter Hero and a mare he owned named Maguelonne, considered to have great possibilities, passed into the possession of Mr. Whitney. He paid £11,000 for the two. I have always understood that Maguelonne was priced at £6000 and Easter Hero at £5000. The mare proved difficult to train because of unsoundness.

Easter Hero proceeded to enhance an already very considerable reputation. He had nothing of the physical characteristics of Jerry M. or Troytown, or, indeed, of most Grand

National winners. In some respects he was not typical of the steeplechaser. Perhaps it was that he had too much quality and looked much more like a flat race horse rather than one that could show equal adaptability at brilliant speed over fences on any sort of course. He was most sensible and intelligent, but highly strung, yet always a pleasure to do with. Before his best efforts he would sweat around the loins and tremble a little as if nervous and apprehensive. Yet no braver horse ever went into a fight.

Easter Hero won two Cheltenham Gold Cups. I have related the wholesale confusion he created at the Canal Turn when it was an open ditch, and he held the fort, as it were, to thwart a score or so of opponents. It was his splendid bid in 1929, when only Gregalach beat him in that enormous field, that will long make his name remembered by all lovers of a good horse. Gregalach was a 100 to 1 chance. Overnight there had been some doubt about starting him because the going was so heavy and likely to remain so. Happily for Mrs. Gemmell, Gregalach's owner, a decision to run was arrived at. He won because the Grand National is a handicap and he was receiving as much as 17 lb. from Easter Hero. Coming on to the racecourse it was a toss up which of the two would win. Sixty and four others had been settled in the various ways that horses are settled in a Grand National. At the first of the three fences Easter Hero began to waver. We knew later that it was here a plate had been partially torn off. It makes a very serious difference to a horse, even to unbalancing and alarming him. But the gallant top-weight battled on to be eased nearing the end and be officially six lengths behind the 100 to 1 winner. One is reminded how in a Grand National there is often far more honour to a loser than a winner.

Some horses that gain Grand National fame have strange histories, though such may not be true of the really top-notchers. Rubio was made to trot alongside an old horse in the station bus in order that the tendons of the forelegs might get calloused and hardened off. He rewarded those that thought of it by winning the 1908 National. Sunloch, who won under what was then the minimum weight of 9 st. 7 lb., after jumping every fence to the right though making the whole of the running, was a hunting-field find. Music Hall, like a number of winners, was the son of a half-bred mare. Master Robert

was said to have figured in a plough, presumably sometime during the War. Double Chance was a gift from his breeder, Mr. Anthony de Rothschild, to the trainer Fred Archer. Donor and recipient had been together in the War, I believe in Palestine. This nine-year-old winner in 1925 came from hunting and went back to it as a pensioner.

The case of the 1926 winner, Jack Horner, is typical of the romance of the greatest steeplechase. Here was a clean thoroughbred horse with a pedigree simply reeking of blue blood. He was by the Cyllene horse, Cyllius, who was related to Gay Crusader from a mare named Melton's Guide, by Melton, out of Knowledge, by Wisdom. As a foal, with his dam, he was sold to Mr. Francis Willey, who became Lord Barnby, for 165 guineas. As a four-year-old gelding the foal of four years before became known as Jack Horner, and, after being broken, was taken into the Blankney Hunt stables, of which Colonel Vernon Willey was Master. Actually the Master rode the horse in the first half of a famous hunt when hounds made a fourteen mile point and are estimated to have covered twenty-six miles.

Colonel Willey told the story at the time to *Horse and Hound*. He changed from him after they had run about fifteen miles. The horse had carried him brilliantly except for a fall at an almost unjumpable brook. Later Jack Horner was drafted and sold at Leicester for 160 guineas. It is a long story to fill in the smaller gaps, but it can be said that after showing form under National Hunt rules he was sold to dissolve a partnership between Mr. Kenneth Mackay and Mr. M. D. Blair. Mr. Mackay became his sole owner for 1250 guineas. He had not to keep him long. The Americans were after the Grand National and setting a pretty hot gallop. Money did not matter so long as the horses could be found. Mr. Stephen Sanford had won in 1923 with Sergeant Murphy, a fortuitous purchase on his part. Now a compatriot in Mr. Charles Schwartz, of New York, came along. He paid £4000 for Jack Horner and agreed to pay £2000 more in the event of winning the race. He was only too glad to make the price £6000 when the time came.

It was a very faint hymn of praise that was heard after poor old Tipperary Tim had won at 100 to 1 in 1928. He had got safely through the barrage set up by Easter Hero at the

Canal Turn. No one had given him a thought. He was tubed, which set people wondering how a horse with a tube in his throat could even complete the course, let alone win. He had a parrot mouth, which, it was said, prevented him from grazing. His sire, Cipango, was once sold for thirteen guineas, a contemptuous price. But he appears to have found a home in Ireland. Tipperary Tim was Irish-bred and reared, and, like so many of his kind, he found his way into a small racing stable in this country. His form may have been modest in the extreme, and he was in no one's mind before the race, but it is a fact that, according to the amateur who rode him, Mr. W. P. Dutton, the horse gave him a grand ride without making any mistakes. Why, such could not even be said of Troytown!

I could go on dilating over the strange histories of Grand National winners, but the relation of them would go far beyond a chapter. Let me take a survey of steeplechasing as a whole as it is to-day. Has it deteriorated? Are the horses as good as they were? I have so often been asked those questions. I favour the notion that the horses are better. You will say that the figures of "National" finishers in proportion to starters do not bear me out. I suggest it would be fairer not to judge alone from a Grand National standard. Actually a great change has come over steeplechasing. Those who were deeply immersed in it fifty years ago would be astonished could they contemplate it now. They would hardly recognise it and would have serious misgivings at the greater speed at which fences are jumped.

The lessons introduced by Flat racing have had their influence on National Hunt racing. It has been speeded up just as Flat racing was from the moment jockeys pulled up their leathers to crouch and throw the weight forward. Balance became all important. Then I think horses in these days, and this is equally true of National Hunt racing as of Flat racing, are trained more scientifically. They are trained for speed. It is the great thing aimed at and specialised in. Years ago it was thought the proper thing in the training of a Grand National horse was to subject him to a couple of four-mile gallops a week, perhaps even more, just because the race is over four and a half miles. We know now that such would be a certain way of checking the development of speed. Rather

would it cause horses to be slow and plodding. A man who is in training for a Marathon is not trained over the full distance.

If, therefore, horses have been trained for speed they will reproduce it in their races. If fit and clean inside they will stay, that is, if they have the constitutions to do so. You can, I contend, develop speed in a horse but not stamina if the constitution is not there. I have personally a great liking for steeplechasing. I like the people who are keen on it, and I admire the horses that excel at it. They seem so very much more intelligent and likeable than strung-up flat racers. What keeps the brake on National Hunt sport in England is our awful winter climate. It messes up fixtures and training; it can create deplorable conditions of going and warn off the public from enduring discomfort on the racecourse. So only the brave and the faithful—some have cynically described them as the needy and the greedy—turn out on the bad days, and crowds are shrunken. On the good days they are big, and the crowd keen and understanding and sporting. We know then what is the greatest enemy of the winter-time racing, and how it would prosper and flourish exceedingly if only our climate would give it a chance.

Perhaps a line or two more of a personal nature may be added to this chapter by way of conclusion. In the year that Master Robert won (1924) I had the honour of accompanying the King and others of Lord Derby's guests from the Grand Stand to the small stand that had been specially erected for the accommodation of His Majesty. It overlooked Valentine's Brook and gave a close-up view of the Canal Turn, while across the way was Becher's. Lord Derby suggested that by accompanying my good friend on the Press, Mr. Meyrick Good, I might assist in describing incidents as they happen at that vital part of the course, often with great rapidity and not always at the same fence. We left the Stand in cars and then had a short walk across some cultivated land to the canal. A platform had been made on a barge, on which the party assembled to be pulled the few yards across.

Very little could be seen of the start though sufficient to tell us that more than one false start had occurred. I recall how His Majesty could not understand why there should be false starts in a Grand National. They do seem unnecessary. A

starter, however, may be seeking perfection. Some of the jockeys may be deliberately hanging back in order not to be hampered and blinded in the mad rush of a big field to the first fence. None were going better than Old Tay Bridge and Master Robert when they came over Valentine's for the second time. We could not see the finish and were wondering what had happened when the telephone rang and I received a message giving the first three. Old Tay Bridge had fallen close home. His Majesty was specially interested in the victory of Master Robert as I believe one of his joint owners, the Earl of Airlie, was a member of Lord Derby's house party at Knowsley. Some time later Lord Derby very kindly sent me a photograph as a memento of the King and the party being ferried across the Canal. He referred to the barge as the *Aquitania*. I know it was a notable occasion for two racing journalists.



## CHAPTER XXII

### THE OLD RACING REPORTER AND THE MODERN RACING COMMENTATOR

Drastic changes in methods and presentation—Charles Greenwood a distinguished "Hotspur"—William Allison, scholarly, engaging, ecstatic, and sage—When Tracery came home—Mellish and his success—A better and brighter Press to-day—The lavishly fed public—Closer liaison with authority—Press services to clean and better racing—The Press of to-morrow.

I HAVE seen great changes in the reporting of racing and the methods of its commentators. Probably nothing essential to racing has changed so much. Primarily, of course, it has been brought about by the general evolution in the presentation of the daily newspaper. Another reason is concerned with the immensely keener competition, the need to be first with the news, and the speeding up in the times of going to press. Still another is the far greater reading public of happenings in the big world of racing. Vastly more people like to have an interest, which means a wager, on the special occasions; certainly many more women do so. Such creates a keener and more critical racing public. They are fed by a Press far better informed and enlightened than in the old days of stereotyped race reporting.

Let me take those reasons as they have been mentioned. My recollections are not too clear-cut of the early days because they have rather faded to a distant horizon. It is, nevertheless, necessary to give some idea of them in order to let the great changes be better understood. No more than thirty years ago it was most unusual for a daily newspaper, however important, to have its own special racing representative. Notable exceptions were the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Morning Post*. Rather was the Press Room on a racecourse used by individuals, most of whom were employed by the Press Association, the *Sportsman* (now merged in the *Sporting Life*), the *Sporting Chronicle*, one

or two other News Agencies of minor importance, and a few weekly tipping periodicals mainly concerned with detailed presentation of form, alleged secret and exclusive information, and the sending out, for various considerations, of very special wires and overnight letters. Writers in the three sporting papers always referred to other newspapers as the "Lay" Press. It always struck me as so comical, as though that which Mr. Charles Greenwood wrote, as "Hotspur" of the *Daily Telegraph*, was to be regarded as amateur knowledge against the professional dictums and views of the mandarins of the Sporting papers.

Perhaps the best bit of racing journalese ever perpetrated occurred in one of the sporting papers of a good many years ago. It was served up on the first day of the Flat racing season, and this is what the buoyant, fantasy-chasing writer said in print with the approval, of course, of the sub-editor and then of the editor:

"In the Spring, the Poet tells us, a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love, but the weather-beaten veteran of the Turf, setting aside such juvenile frivolities, turns his attention to the weights for the Spring Handicaps."

On the other hand a watchful sub-editor saved his paper and the man from a proper howler when he found an alarming mixture of language in a description of the scene at Ascot. When he wrote of the glorious "garbage" of Ascot he obviously meant "foliage." You will see what danger, unconsciously, he headed into through straying away from his horses. There was the writer who loved the words "superogation" and "indubitably." With him it was at all times a "task of superogation" to lavish praise on one or other of his pet owners, trainers, or jockeys. If it was unquestionably the case it was "indubitably so." That phrase of the "baker's dozen" going to the post for the next race to be discussed has taken a lot of killing. Every now and then it shows signs of breathing.

The function of the Press Association, then as now, was to supply a service of racing news to all papers desiring it. The service embraced programmes, returns of each day's racing, which, of course, included details as to winners, weights, losers, jockeys, trainers, betting, and descriptions. They would also supply varying services, "A," for example, being

an amplified report and "B" an abbreviated one. The one naturally cost the newspaper more than the other. Men employed on such work had poor chances of developing initiative and exploiting any bright ideas. The professional racing reporter was bound to become hack-like in his outlook and methods.

I am bound to confess, therefore, that the Press Room of thirty or more years ago did not impress me. It must have suited the limited requirements of the times. I do not want to be unfair in saying that, but then I see such an infinitely better Press to-day than then. Education and some sophistication, a knowledge of human nature and horses, a trifle of scholarship did not seem to matter. There had not come the awakening force of competition and newspaper speeding up.

Of course, there were exceptions. The name of a predecessor has been mentioned. I barely remember him because there was an interval of seven years between his death and the time when I came to fill the position he had occupied with such distinction. I do know that my best friends assured me that I should find him a hard man to follow. I found that to be most true, which is the greatest tribute I can pay to the memory of Charles Greenwood. He must have set all his contemporaries a shining example in intelligent race-reading and the presentation of first-hand and reliable news. Examples of the kind are bound to have an influence and a bearing on the evolution of these things. I admire him, too, though I could never hope to emulate him, that he possessed a flair for making money out of betting. My experience is that you cannot specialise in racing both as a news gatherer and commentator and in betting. Charles Greenwood was obviously a fortunate exception. I have preferred to stick to that which I have best understood.

The late Mr. William Allison can be quoted as another exceptional racing writer. He was at the zenith of his powers at the beginning of the century and was maintaining them until a few years after the War. His medium was the column he filled twice a week as "The Special Commissioner" of the *Sportsman*. His personality through his pen is unforgettable. No man had more readers up to the point that the limited circulation of a sporting paper permitted. No one wrote with greater scholarship and at times with more charm or humour



THE AUTHOR



when he was not engaging in caustic criticism. Himself a keen and sometimes savage critic, at times he was also impatient of criticism. He would be swept away in his downright advocacy of this or that stallion, of his exposition of Bruce Lowe's alleged infallible Figure system of breeding, and, indeed, of anything to which he gave the allegiance of his brilliant pen. He made followers; he also made critics and enemies, but they all read him.

Allison boldly used his freedom of the *Sportsman's* columns to further his ideas and personal projects. To the Cobham Stud he was instrumental in bringing Trenton from Australia. I shall never forget his ecstasy on meeting at Southampton the well-known horse Tracery, who, by arrangement with his Argentine owner, Señor Unzue, was coming to stand at the Cobham Stud, to be used by a syndicate which he (Allison) was engaged in getting together at £400 a share. Mark you, Tracery was foaled in 1909. After a distinguished racing career, and some time at the stud in this country, he was sold to the Argentine for an enormous sum, understood to be £53,000. It was not until July, 1923, that he was brought back to England to be exploited by the syndicate, so that he would be fifteen years old for his next season in this country. They were asking for thirty subscriptions of £400 for each of three years, at the end of which the horse would become the property of the subscribers. Not bad business, it will be said, for Señor Unzue for a horse so old.

The *Arlanza*, which brought Tracery back to this country, was two hours late arriving at Southampton. She was expected at twelve o'clock, and to fill in the time Allison and Señor Unzue went back to the South Western Hotel. "It is rather dreadful," he wrote in the *Sportsman* the following Monday, "to wait in such circumstances—at least I find it so—and then to try to lunch when you feel no inclination that way. Señor Unzue, however, was much calmer than I was, and even I was equal to consuming half an excellent lobster and a tankard of bitter—not so bad after all." And, following on a glowing description of the actual arrival scenes and the procession of the cavalcade through the docks, the writer stressed the importance of closing the list of the Tracery Syndicate, while he added: "Señor Unzue has promised to write me his final decision as to what Tracery's fee will be if the syndicate list is

not fulfilled, but I know it will be not less than 500 guineas." Actually the horse had only a single season at Cobham. Then he died.

The writer-breeder, buyer and salesman of bloodstock was, indeed, an intriguing personality. I am sure he did a great deal in establishing the place in racing journalism of the "First Person, Singular." His cultured diction pointed a moral which I do not think was lost. His enthusiasms, especially for causes he took up and was interested in, whether in theory or in practice, had at any rate to be admired. He gave the impression of loving his facility in writing. It just swept him on.

Another racing writer of the period, who I am sure was an influence for good, was the late Mr. Mellish, the first "Robin Goodfellow" of the *Daily Mail*. The high standard he set caused him to be a slow worker, bearing in mind that he was on such a swift paper as regards the urgent necessity for early copy. I am sure he tore up more sheets than he filled in his conscientious endeavour to express what he wanted in the way he had in his mind. Not only did he make his contributions very widely read but he was well-informed and desperately in earnest in trying to find winners for his readers.

He was a good listener to money when it was talking on a big betting race. One of his best friends was the bookmaker, Mr. Harry Slowburn, who would "mark his card" as to what, in his opinion, represented the "live goods" in the betting quotations. Then he would use the shrewd discrimination he had. He had all the attributes of a fine racing journalist. He could write really well, interlarding the serious stuff with something specially pungent, caustic, and witty; he practised the art of condensation which guarded against the dangers of loquacity; he was a better judge of men than of horses; and he found his most valuable aides in the rank and file of racing than in the upper category.

I greatly missed him when he retired and when he passed on. He seemed to tire not so much of work as of the routine of racing and the everlasting meeting of the same faces. He told me that he thought he would never come on a racecourse again and he very nearly kept his word. Jockeys of the greatest renown in their time, "Morny" Cannon, Charles Wood, and Fred Rickaby, can be quoted as instances of Turf notabilities who passed into oblivion when once they had finished with the

calls of the racecourse. Gordon Richards has told me that he does not think he will ever be seen on a racecourse again once he has given up riding. For one thing there will be no necessity in his case. He will have made plenty of money and to spare, leaving him with no need to carry on as a trainer when too heavy or unwanted as a jockey. Still it is rather strange there should be this feeling to quit for ever the sport which has given you your name, and, in the case of the jockeys mentioned, their fortunes.

In the days of the three racing writers of whom I have been writing (excepting, perhaps, Mellish) there was no need to worry about "copy" being in at the earliest possible moment, either while racing was in progress or as soon as possible after its conclusion. Any time up to midnight or even later would do, especially for the sporting papers. What do we find to-day? Certain London newspapers publishing simultaneously South and North and calling for "copy" almost before anything has happened. Once upon a time a dawdling messenger or a parcel sent by train would suffice. Nowadays even modern telegraphy at speed scarcely suffices. The telephone is ousting the telegraph, and one day wireless and the telewriter will be found to supersede the obsolete telephone.

When I went over to see Papyrus race against Zev at Belmont Park I found the Press Room on that racecourse to be a noisy hive of speed work, with direct cabling going on, and much discord from typewriters. I returned to one of our typical Press Rooms to find our purveyors of racing news slogging away with pen and pencil, the evening paper men giving instalments of their output to the telegraph office, the morning paper men patiently endeavouring, some of them, to keep pace with the afternoon's racing. One day not long after that experience in America a man with a portable typewriter got to work in the Press Room. He had given no notice of his intention. The startling effect could only have been depicted by H. M. Bateman. A beautiful blend of horror, outrage, indignation, pain and annoyance, to give way, when coherency was arrived at, to protests, sarcasms, and sincere invitations to quit.

But the barrier of tradition and old conventions had been breached. The pioneer rapidly had a following. The Press Room subsided. Typewriters in full operation somehow acted



as silencers of the old-time garrulous clamour. They are part of the furniture of every racecourse Press Room to-day. So now, by writing direct on to one's machine, a column and a half description, say of the Grand National, and all the incidents connected with it, can be on the wire or called over the phone in batches within an hour or little more of the race being over. How the old writers would have been astonished at this. I hesitate to say so, but I do not think some of them would have been heard of in these later years.

Only the reader who can compare thirty years ago and to-day can have any conception of the great changes in racing journalism. They are the outcome of the ever-increasing demands of the newspapers for first-hand news, not only of the big events but of everyday happenings. Sometimes I think the public are so well served as to be encouraged not to come racing. They have such an abundance of information served up to them. Everything pertaining to a betting interest is lavished on them except a sight of the horses, and I am afraid that would not be enlightening to most people who back horses.

To-day the functions of the Press Association have been elaborated out of all knowledge. Thanks to the courtesy and helpfulness of owners and jockeys, a wonderfully reliable list of probable starters and jockeys is available towards the end of an afternoon for the next day's racing. Trainers make known their intentions; jockeys disclose their riding engagements. The information is given entirely voluntarily. The alternative would be overnight declarations of runners, against which there is much objection from many quarters, especially from trainers who do not wish to be bound by a decision made overnight. New circumstances, such as changes in the going, might arise to call for a change of plan. As a protection against such official innovation—it prevails in some other countries—the Press are assisted to make the unofficial list as complete and as accurate as possible. One cannot doubt that it is a most valuable addition to information available for all who follow racing.

The Press Association is something more in these days than a purveyor of essential details. It competes with the individual newspaper in being first with the news. It is a rare amplifier. Nothing is too minor, either in regard to man or

horse, not to be made the subject of biographical or racing history. If a newspaper comes out with an exclusive item of news of some importance it is for the Association to deny or confirm, usually in the form of fresh news. I have had much experience of that.

There are more individual writers serving the Press in these times. I am sure they mark an advance on the old school. If they have some understanding of the breed and make and shape of the racehorse so much the better. The public, I have found, are anxious to be educated on those points. It has, indeed, rejoiced me that there is a public interested in the breed of the horse as distinct from betting on him. And what a vast field of research is opened out, what romance is unearthed, and what good stories are to be told of most important winners! In these directions the racing writer is extremely fortunate. He has such wonderful chances of interesting his readers. The wells never run dry or are ever in danger of doing so. There is no hard and fast rule governing everything. The horse is a thing of flesh and blood. He responds, or he does not, to human understanding of him, either in his training or riding, or both. Breeding on the highest plane can be confounded by a weak constitution or mental frailty. A stout constitution can do much for an unfashionable line of blood and perhaps bring it into fashion.

Everything, including my own part in racing, is so very much more highly specialised in these times. Breeding, betting, training, and writing. The book lies open to be read easier than ever before. I suggest the Press is entitled to much credit for bringing about a change, or rather, for hurrying it on. It has caused much light to be thrown on places which were once dark. No doubt competition in the Press has had something to do with it. Always there must be an effort made to go one better than the last, to give the reader something more than he has been given elsewhere. More sophistication is in the racing stable from the trainer downwards. On the whole it can be said that the days of highly sensational betting coups are things of the past. There are searchlights on the Downs, watching eyes and listening ears at all times. What the Press does not report comes out by way of leakages into the inner world of betting. The tipping papers have had

their day because of the enterprise of the daily papers and the Press Association that serves them.

A favourite for a big race may not cough or pull up lame without the news being published an hour or two later. The trainer is rung up and will either deny or confirm the report. There is no chance for the professional betting folk to have the information to themselves and for their own purposes. The Press makes it common property. On the whole it would be right to say that the relations between most owners and their trainers and those whose duty it is to write for the papers are most cordial. I know I have some of my best friends among them. Others, I hope, respect me. One is not foolish enough to ask leading questions even of friends. A fair one receives a civil and courteous answer.

I, and I am sure others, acknowledge with gratitude the assistance of trainers, without which it would not have been possible to make a success of one's work or entitle one to be regarded as well-informed. The racing writer of shrewd and sound judgment has an invaluable faculty; if he has the gift of putting his ideas into good English he is to be congratulated; and if, added to those attributes, he be well informed, in the eyes of his readers, and possess some personality in the estimation of those he must meet, then he will always hold his own and, perhaps, more than that as a high-class journalist, representing what is expected of him in these strenuous and highly competitive days.

I am well aware that much store is set on the ability of the man who can tip many winners, if possible more than the next best man. Proprietors, editors, and circulation managers of newspapers have a very special place for him during the time he is riding the crest of the wave. When for a time, as is inevitable, he disappears into the trough the use for him is not so special. They do not mind so much about intelligent writing. They want winners so that they may advertise the fact, shout, scream and boast about it. And they are so honest about it too! One day they tell you that their "Lynx Eye" gave five of the half-dozen winners and at prices which would have won a fabulous amount on a pound accumulator. The reader is thrilled and profoundly impressed. The next day "Lynx Eye" fails to give a winner. There is no shout about that. Of course not. Just a convenient silence.

I have to confess that I relish the tipping part of my work, that is the day-to-day duty rather than on the big races which interest me so much, least of all. Yet it has to be recognised that the majority of one's readers want to be inspired as to what is likely to win that day. Obviously one is under an obligation to them and it must be fulfilled. And when one has done so with some success it affords very considerable personal satisfaction, especially when one has been at considerable pains to give reasons for a selection and everything has worked out precisely as prophesied.

The sensitive individual must wince when his much-considered selection, say, for a Grand National, falls at the first fence as I well remember Poethlyn doing when he had gone out favourite for his second Grand National at Aintree. Or, again, when his choice is badly drawn at Epsom, or left at the post no matter where. I am aware how my confrères work desperately hard to give the public all the news possible about a big race, and when the selection of one or more of them succeeds I have seen the look of deep satisfaction on their faces. One may envy them their success just as on another occasion they may secretly envy mine, but at least satisfaction over success does indicate an unceasing endeavour to give the public the full benefit of experience, judgment and information.

The Press of to-day, as compared with thirty and forty years ago, have to deal with racing much speeded up. Races are run faster and from end to end. Keen eyes and good glasses are necessary to take in the quick changes taking place in a big field of horses. The modern racehorse is trained for speed. Stable management has changed. Good hay and oats are as vitally important now as they were in the days of St. Simon, Mathew Dawson, and Fred Archer, or as late as the nineties when there were such notabilities as Isinglass, Ladas, Persimmon, and Galtee More. Whether they were better horses and whether our modern race of thoroughbred has degenerated I am not prepared to say. I am certainly not old enough to venture on first-hand comparisons.

The modern racehorse has a great deal to contend with and more to worry him, more to fray his nerves, because of the almost frantic way of racing at top pace from end to end. On account of that he cannot stand as much as his ancestors. He cannot come again so soon. There must be more interval for

recuperation between efforts. Classic winners, more often than not, do not train on to make Cup winners as four-year-olds. Perhaps the greater commercial stud value of the horse, and the desire to make him revenue-earning as quickly as possible, have something to do with that, though the main reason is inability to withstand the greater strain on the racehorse of the twentieth century.

His trainer is more enlightened as regards stable management. Far more attention is paid now to such important matters as sanitation and hygiene. Individual treatment is lavished on horses. They are not all treated as one unit with the same diet and quantities for all. And on the training grounds it is the same. The trainer of to-day, I should say, compares favourably with the old masters. He believes in studying the individual in his work as well as in his hours of ease and feeding, while the most successful of them all is the one who will underdo rather than overdo it in private, leaving it to the racecourse to do any overdoing necessary to secure success.

These things must have been apparent to any close observer as well as to the trained Press observer. We have had doping scares from time to time, first of the doper alleged to have imposed stimulants, and then of the other kind of malefactor who had a criminal motive in retarding outstanding favourites. On the whole, though, the period on which I can look back and survey with some satisfaction has been singularly free of the doping evil. Common-sense trainers have understood the importance of relying on their own skill and understanding rather than on the introduction of deleterious artificial aids. I suggest that the Press has made an important contribution in an endeavour to keep things clean and wholesome. I am sure there is general improvement and uplifting. Some deception of the handicappers, the running of horses unfit rather than in the interests of their education, and waiting for another day there will always be. These things do not mean deliberate pulling of horses. I find much satisfaction in saying with all seriousness that there was never less of that sort of thing.

I like to think the Jockey Club and racecourse executives are not unaware of the value of Press co-operation. As I have written in another chapter, the gulf between the Jockey Club is not now so wide. Racing has had need of its friends at

times, and, not least, the friendship and help of the Press. They have been given willingly because it has been in the best interests of racing to give. To-day racing has to meet the weight of severe competition which, if anything, is increasing. When dog racing was first introduced a prominent member of the Jockey Club gave it a short life of two years. The period expired long ago, and we know that it has weaned away so many from racing and done it harm. The enormous growth of motoring and the desire to go much further afield than outlying racecourses, football as an enormous counter-attraction to National Hunt racing in the winter-time, the spread of the super-cinemas—all these have absorbed much money that used to come to the racecourses. After all, there must be some limit to the money available for spending on pleasure and betting.

The critics may not at all times have pleased the Jockey Club. At various times I have advocated some measure of centralised racing though well aware of the deeply-rooted vested interests in some of the oldest of the minor racecourses. Still there must be members of the Jockey Club who in their hearts now admit that centralisation would mean a most desirable bracing up and would give the Totalisator a better chance than it has ever had. It does seem so incongruous that racecourses on which much capital has been expended in recent years in order to make the racing more attractive for the public—Kempton Park is an excellent example—should get no encouragement in the form of more days, more opportunities for securing a return on such capital, and the public denied the chance of patronising such enterprising places, while other racecourses, which are stagnant and out of date, should hold precisely the same number of days in the fixture list.

No better example in splendid racecourse enterprise could have been shown than by the Jockey Club at their headquarters at Newmarket. They have allotted themselves no extra days though we would wish them to do so, but then they already possessed twenty-nine days of racing a year compared with the eight of such as Kempton Park, Newbury, York, and other recognised first-class courses. There seems to be much inequality there, and a positive closure applied to that enterprise, which, while in the interests of shareholders, must also be good for racing and sound from the public point of view.

I turn to the future of the Press on the racecourse. It is agreed that it is necessary for both public and racecourse. How will it continue to serve? That there will be big changes in the next score of years is just as great a certainty as the changes during the last two decades. But they will probably be more revolutionary. Wireless, broadcasting, television of scenes and incidents, will come nearer as they become more practicable in their adaptation to racing. There will be a fascinating story to be told by the racing journalist of the nineteen-fifties. I should be thrilled if I thought I might be privileged to contribute to it or even assist in the making of it.

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